

2022 . VOLUME 69 . NUMBER 2

PIONEER

LATTER-DAY SAINT
COLONIZATION IN
Arizona
PART TWO



PUBLISHED BY THE SONS OF UTAH PIONEERS

PIONEER



COVER: *Thatcher Arizona Chapel*, by Al Rounds. The stake meeting house, Relief Society building, and stake offices where Spencer W. Kimball's father, Andrew Kimball, served as stake president. The painting was completed two weeks before the meeting house was destroyed in a fire.

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THE PIONEER VALUES: We honor the pioneers for their faith in God, devotion to family, loyalty to church and country, hard work and service to others, courage in adversity, personal integrity, and unyielding determination.

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It is my pleasure to introduce *Pioneer* magazine's Latter-day Saint Colonization of Arizona, Part Two, focused on the southeastern Arizona settlements.

Living conditions along the Little Colorado and in other parts of northern Arizona were difficult. The winters were long and cold, the soil was poor, and the river periodically washed out settlers' dams and canals. Stories of warm, fertile valleys in the southeastern Arizona area, as described by Mormon Battalion members and various scouting parties, created a burning desire among some of the northern Arizona Saints to move south into Gila Valley.

A small party consisting of five families and two single men set out in March 1879 to explore this area. They soon established the town of Smithville and built a combination chapel and schoolhouse.

In the summer of 1881 reinforcements arrived as settlers abandoned Brigham City on the Little Colorado to move to Smithville. Some pioneers volunteered to move to Arizona; others received callings from Church headquarters to do so. Shortly, other communities were established.

Jesse K. Rodgers introduced a bill in the Arizona Territorial Legislature creating a new county encompassing these recently settled communities. The bill passed in 1881, and Safford became

The National Society of Sons of Utah Pioneers strives to study the history not only of Utah but of the American West.

the first county seat of newly formed Graham County.

Rapid Latter-day Saint settlement necessitated the creation of the St. Joseph Stake in May 1883 with four wards. Christopher Layton—a faithful leader and successful farmer, rancher, and businessman—was called from Kaysville, Utah, to serve as stake president. Layton bought two thousand acres of land and resold it in lots to Latter-day Saints moving into the area. This was the origin of Thatcher, which soon became the stake center.

In 1890 St. Joseph Academy was established as a Latter-day Saint school at Central. The next year it was moved to Thatcher where, despite challenges, it evolved into a high school and then a junior college. In 1933 it was turned over to Graham County and the state of Arizona, eventually becoming Eastern Arizona College.

Southeast Arizona's future became still brighter in February 1894 as construction of the Gila Valley and Northern Railroad began. When completed, the railroad brought greater growth and prosperity to the valley.

The traditional yet forward-looking environment of southeast Arizona was ideally suited to the maturing Kingdom of God, producing such prominent Latter-day Saints as the Eyring family and Spencer W. Kimball, the twelfth president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

I grew up in southern Nevada and always loved my neighbor-state, Arizona. This past year has brought even greater depth to that love. Shortly after becoming national SUP president last September, I met Margaret (Peggy) Cowherd, who in June became my wife, sweetheart, and eternal companion. She

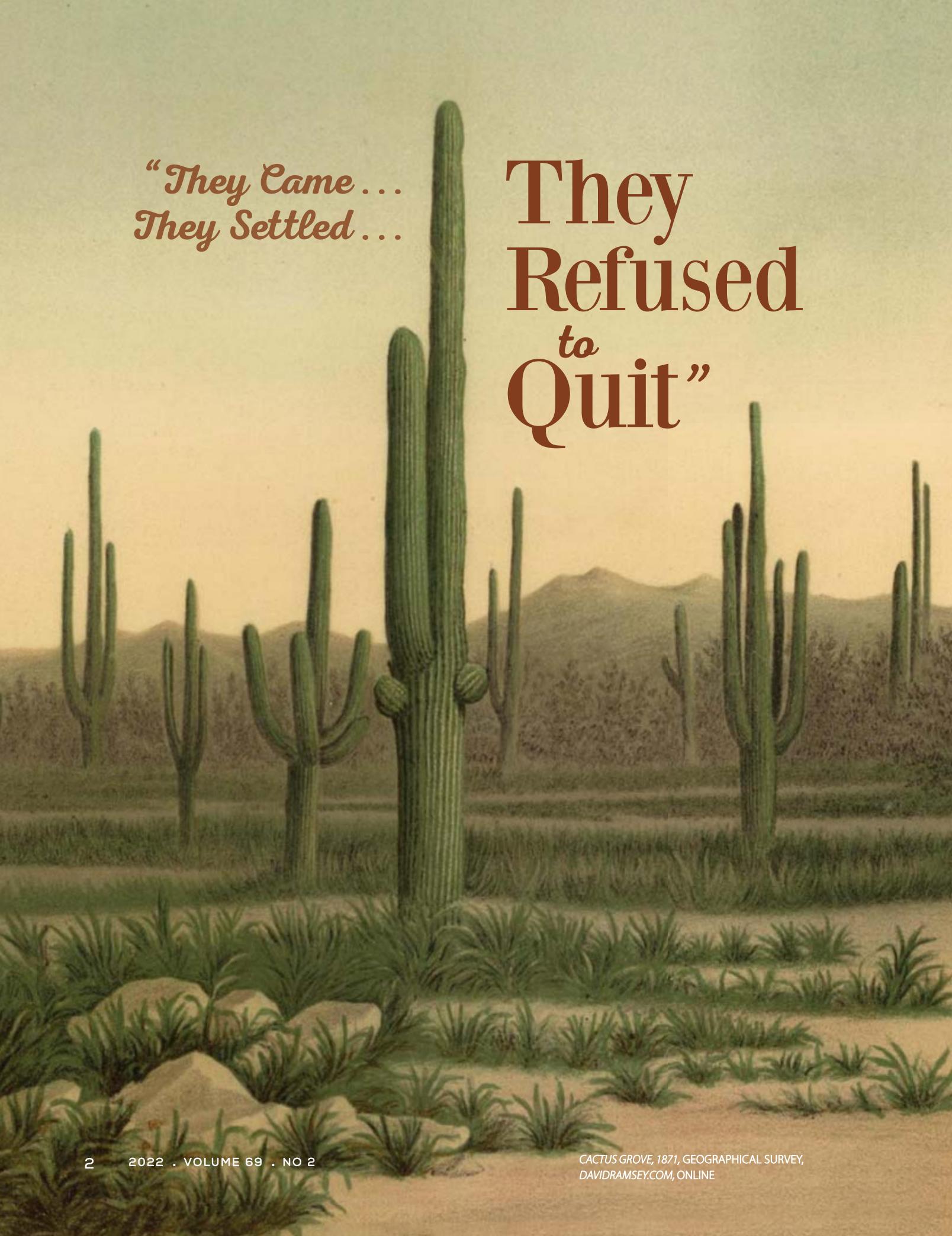
was born and raised in New Jersey, had a stellar career in the New York area, and was a faithful Methodist. She received an eighteen-month business assignment in Scottsdale, Arizona, but couldn't find a local Methodist congregation that fit her comfortably. She eventually asked associates if they might recommend a church she could attend. One introduced her to the Church of Jesus Christ, and a year later she received her temple blessings in the Mesa Arizona Temple. For me, Peggy is the most important Latter-day Saint pioneer that Arizona has produced.

Be assured that as you read and review this issue of *Pioneer*, you will appreciate the insights that its articles, beautiful photos, and artwork will provide you. You will feel the love that its authors, editors, and designers have for southeast Arizona and its remarkable founders. And in the narratives of southeast Arizona pioneers, you will see the Lord's hand and feel his love for this special part of his vineyard and its faithful planters.

On September 10, 2022, I will step down as president of the National Society of Sons of Utah Pioneers. Before doing so, I wish to thank all who serve on the *Pioneer* magazine board and all contributing authors for their dedication to strengthening and maintaining the excellence of the magazine. May it continue as the flagship endeavor of our organization through the loyal support of our members, donors, and subscribers.

If you are not currently associated with us, please consider subscribing to *Pioneer* and joining the National Society of the Sons of Utah Pioneers. □

LARRY M. GIBSON
SUP NATIONAL PRESIDENT 2022



*“They Came...
They Settled...”*

**They
Refused
to
Quit”**

Latter-day Saint Settlement of Southeastern Arizona

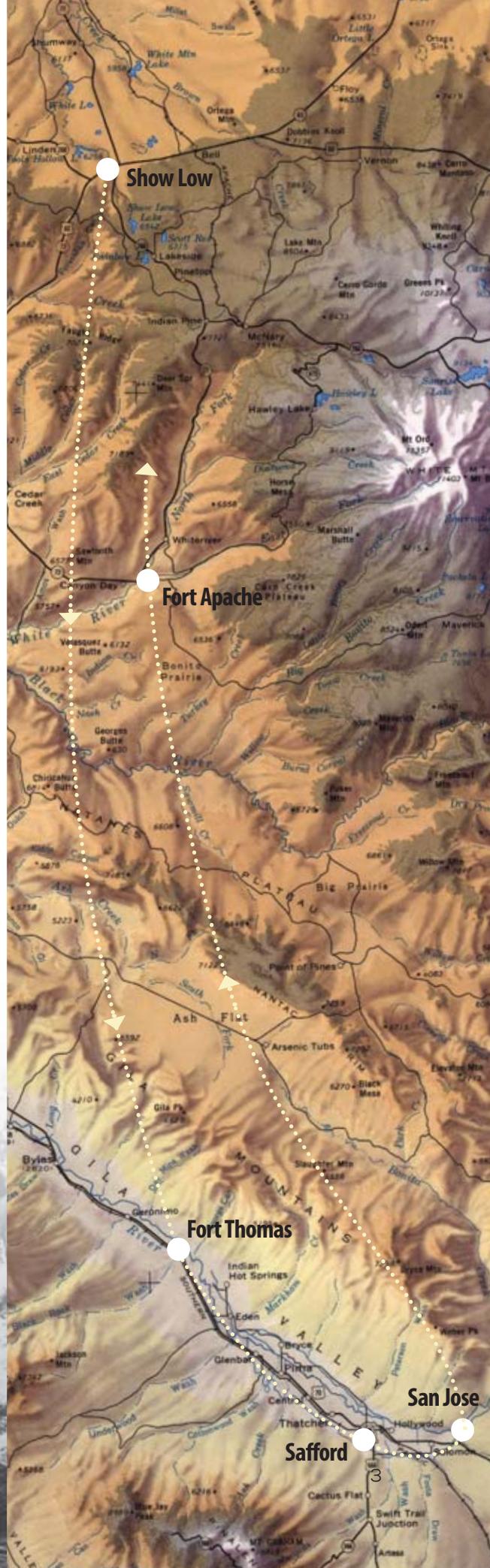
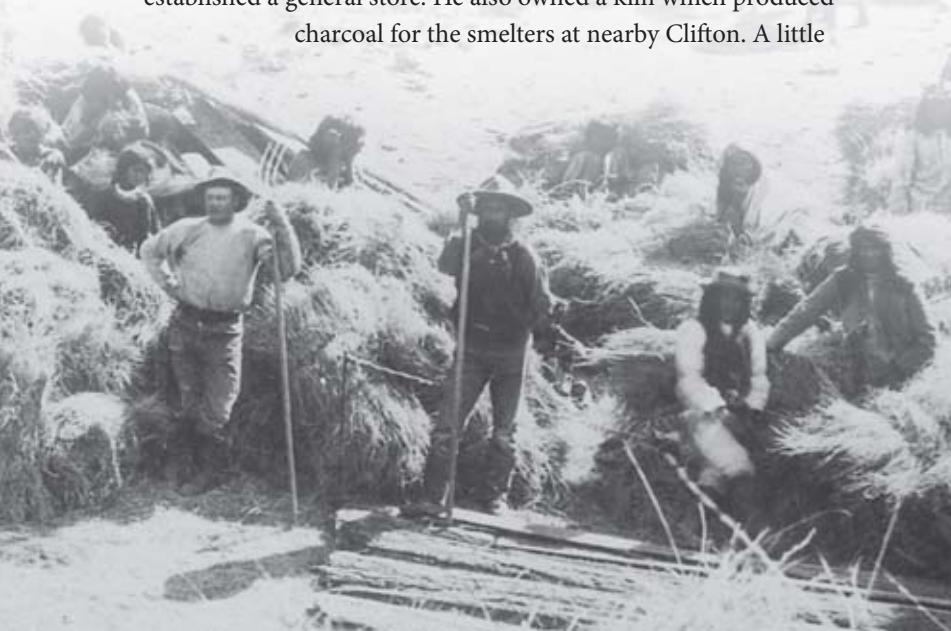
BY WAYNE K. HINTON

Within three years of the 1876 establishment of the four original Little Colorado River colonies in northeastern Arizona, discouragement was overtaking many of the initial settler families, even those determined to remain in Arizona. The discouragement sprang from many causes: ongoing threats of summer floods, failed dams and ditches, frequent dust storms, inadequate access to potable water, high costs of food and supplies, isolation from family and friends, extreme seasonal temperature swings, and, despite abandonment of the United Order in most Latter-day Saint settlements elsewhere, enforced adherence to the Order in northeastern Arizona.¹

In January 1879 a group of restive residents from the Silver Creek area met with William R. Teeple, a veteran of the Mormon Battalion, and requested that he lead a scouting party to southeastern Arizona's Gila Valley to locate potential settlement sites there. Scouts were soon outfitted, setting out with Teeple in mid-February.²

Two weeks into their trip, the party stopped briefly at Fort Thomas at the northern end of Gila Valley and about ninety miles south of Show Low. Continuing south, the party soon passed by several cultivated farms. At the little town of Safford there was a store and a boarding house. The town also boasted a flour mill under construction, and Mexican laborers were working on a ditch that would convey water from the Gila River to the mill. Beyond Safford was the even smaller town of Solomonville where I. E. Solomon had established a general store. He also owned a kiln which produced charcoal for the smelters at nearby Clifton. A little

charcoal for the smelters at nearby Clifton. A little



Jesse N. Smith



further on, at San Jose, a few Mexican families farmed several dozen acres and ran a mill.³

Most of Gila Valley's Euro-American settlers welcomed the Latter-day Saint scouts, encouraging them to bring others to the area as an additional bulwark against outlaws and hostile Indians. With this reassurance, the scouting party chose a townsite about eight miles northwest of Safford and, under the provisions of the 1862 Homestead Act, claimed sixteen quarter sections of land by cutting and placing logs to mark the corners of each quarter. They then returned to the northeastern Arizona settlements by way of Fort Apache, reporting favorably to stake president Jesse N. Smith in Snowflake.⁴

Smith subsequently met with interested colonists and organized them as a small branch with Jesse K. Rogers as presiding elder. Smith did not require the Gila Valley settlers to establish a strict branch of the United Order, but he did enjoin them to keep the Sabbath, maintain faithful records, observe regular fasts, pay tithes and offerings, and follow ordained priesthood leaders. They were also instructed to "comply strictly with the law in their claims, to be honest in their dealing with the outside brethren and, if the outsiders started an enterprise which was for the public good, let them see that they could depend on the Saints to help it along." In March 1879, twenty-eight persons comprising four families and four men traveling singly—William, Harriet, and Caroline Teebles and their children; Joseph K. and Josephine Rogers and their children; William Thomp-

son and Earl Haws and their families; and Henry Dall, Hyrum Weech, and John and Thomas Sessions—departed Snowflake for the townsite the scouts had marked out in Gila Valley.⁵

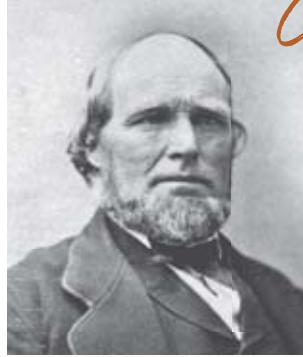
Arriving at their destination fifteen days later, the colonists named their tiny settlement Smithville in honor of Jesse N. Smith, who remained their stake president. They laid out sixteen city blocks with four lots per block, making the sixth block the town square. There, a log meetinghouse was finished and dedicated before any homes were built. Numbered lots were drawn from a box and assigned to families, who lived in tents and wagon boxes until their homes could be raised.⁶

While the town meeting hall was under construction, school was held in a tent; students sat on rough log benches to study math, reading, and spelling.⁷ When Smithville residents requested a post office, territorial postal authorities granted the request. But because there were already a large number of "Smithville" post offices nationwide, and because Pima County did not yet have a town named Pima, the authorities assigned that name to the post office, indirectly honoring the original Indigenous farmers of the region.⁸

By October 1880, Pima's population had grown to thirty-six families. During the stake conference held that month in Snowflake, the Pima Ward was formed and Joseph K. Rogers was sustained as its bishop.⁹ In 1881

WAGON CROSSING THE GILA RIVER, PIMA, ARIZONA, CA. 1905

Christopher Layton



Rogers introduced a proposal in the Arizona Territorial Legislature to create Graham County with Pima as the county seat. Surprisingly, the proposal passed, but

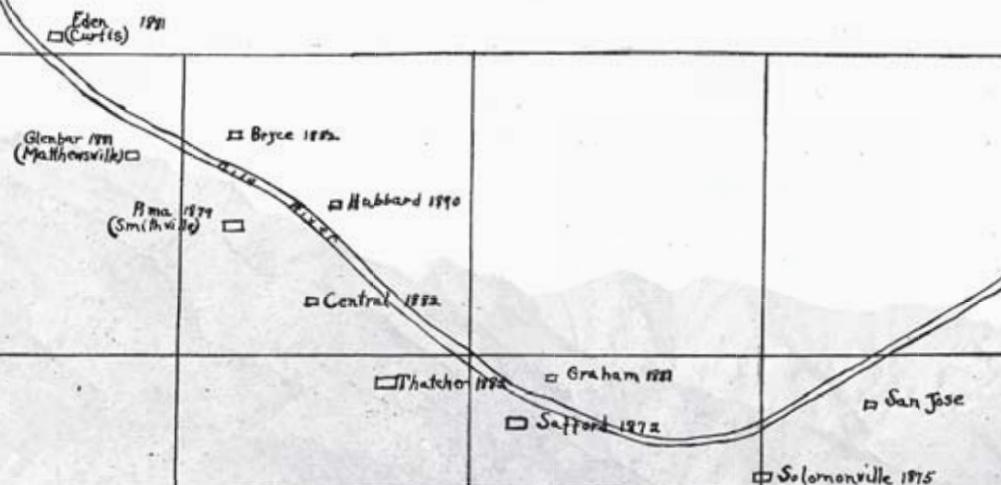
with Safford rather than Pima as the county seat.¹⁰

The influx of settlers was so rapid that, by late 1882, not all farms owned by Latter-day Saints could be appropriately served by what was still called the

Smithville Canal. Some new colonists moved up the valley to settle at Central. As attacks by Indigenous warriors became infrequent, other Saints crossed the Gila River to establish the towns of Bryce, Hubbard, Graham, and

Eden (later renamed Curtis).¹¹ And in May 1883 the Snowflake Stake was divided into the Snowflake and St. Joseph Stakes. The new stake was comprised of the Pima, Central, Graham, and Curtis Wards and several branches. Christopher Layton was set apart as the first president of St. Joseph Stake, moving his family to Gila Valley from St. David, Cochise County, in the southeastern corner of Arizona. No longer would the Saints in Gila Valley have to make the three-hundred-fifty-mile round trip to Snowflake for stake conference.¹²

To assist Latter-day Saint settlers moving into Gila Valley, Layton acquired two thousand acres of land near the isolated homestead of John Moody, who had moved his family there in 1881. Layton built a large home and began selling building lots and small farms to incoming Saints. This was the





*William, Harriet, and
Caroline Teebles*



*Carolyn Teebles and
daughter, circa 1885*



THE TEEPLES HOME, FIRST HOUSE IN PIMA

beginning of Thatcher, named after Elder Moses Thatcher of the Quorum of the Twelve. The fast-growing town was located about five miles southeast of Pima and soon had its own Latter-day Saint ward.¹³ Matthewsville, the settlement initiated in 1880 by Joseph L. Matthews and three of his sons—David H., Solomon F., and Charles A.—had also grown sufficiently large by 1888 to host a ward.¹⁴

Because many of the original Gila Valley Saints were related to one another or were former neighbors and friends, there was strong cohesiveness and homogeneity among them. Ties of kinship were deepened when a number of “refugees” from the Brigham City United Order arrived in the summer of 1881.¹⁵

Despite progress, the southeastern Arizona settlements were beset by challenges. Settlers who came to the Gila Valley from northeastern Arizona discovered that, like the Little Colorado, the Gila was prone to late-spring and mid-summer flooding. And because its average flow was significantly greater than that of the Little Colorado, its waters were often difficult to control. Saints at Matthewsville lost crops to flooding during the town’s early years; floods at other settlements took away precious topsoil with the crops. After the town of Clifton was obliterated by flooding, flood control dams and dykes were gradually introduced along the Gila to prevent future ravages of the fragile desert lands.¹⁶

There were other trials besides flooding. Settlers at Forest Dale were driven out by Indian raids, and those at Matthewsville endured infestations of chinch bugs which damaged or destroyed grain and corn crops. During their first difficult years in the Gila Valley, most settlers experienced severe food shortages, surviving from late fall through late spring on winter squash. Outlaws were a constant threat, and when concerns were elevated, women and children from surrounding settlements were sent to Pima to stay in the schoolhouse while the men stayed behind to guard animals and property.¹⁷

As was the case in the Little Colorado settlements early on, the challenges of colonization led some Gila Valley Saints to return to Utah or to settle elsewhere. But the majority chose to remain. In the words of Mark Bryce, a twenty-first-century descendant of those early settlers, “They came and they settled and they refused to quit. They stayed and they made this valley their home.”¹⁸

Most of the first homes in the valley were constructed of cottonwood logs. Water had to be hauled from the river until wells could be dug. Marriages were solemnized outdoors under the shade of trees. Baptisms were performed in stock ponds or watering tanks. Many supplies had to be freighted from Bowie or Tucson. There were no mortuaries, so the dead were laid out and prepared for burial by family or friends. Generally, little cash was circulated so people traded and bartered. People learned to get by with what they had or with what they could make or find. Children typically received simple homemade toys or a handful of raisins or nuts for Christmas.¹⁹

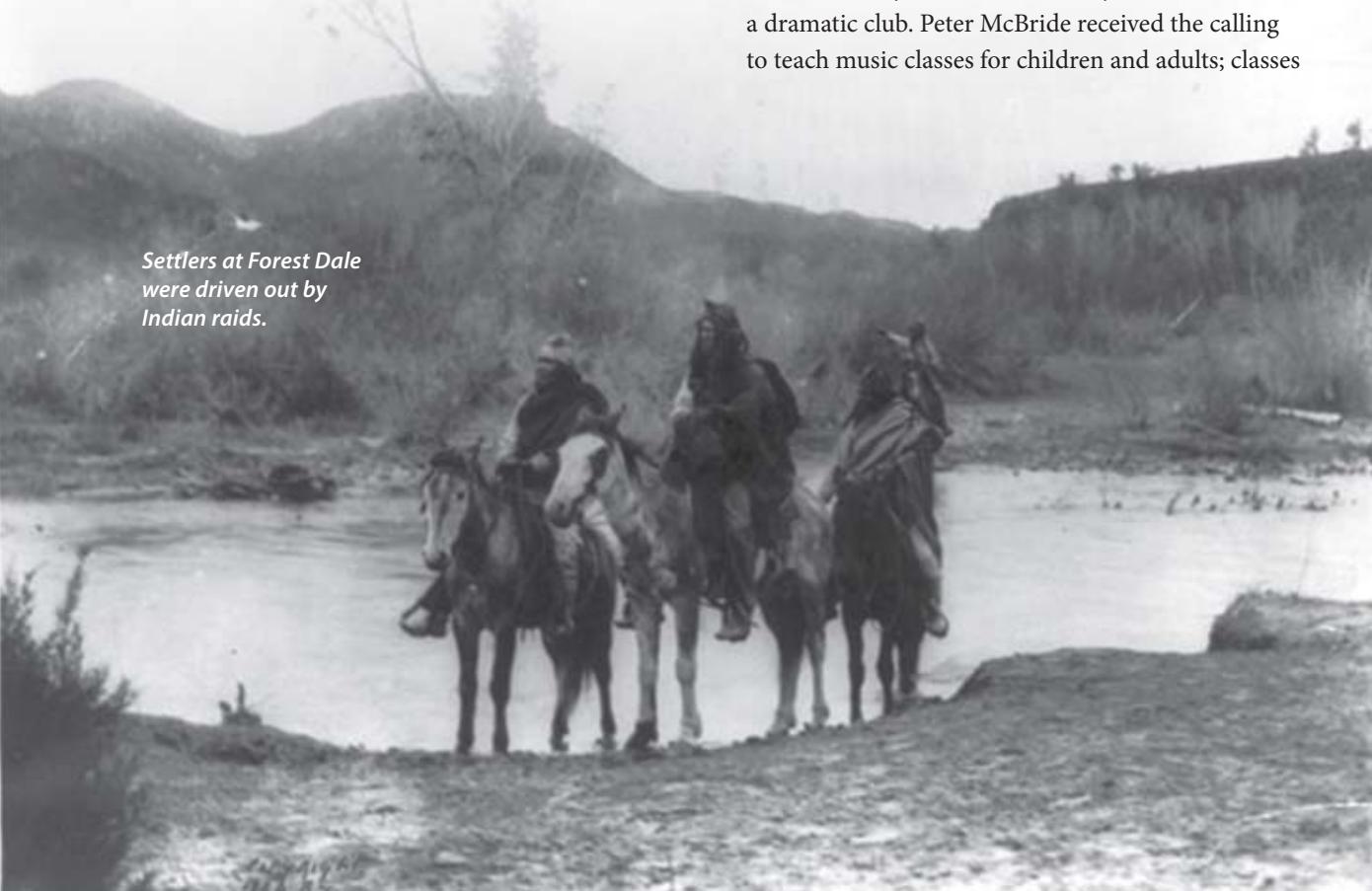
Virtually everyone in Gila Valley farmed; many also had milk cows and chickens and sold milk, butter, and eggs in addition to vegetables and fruit. The best markets were at Fort Thomas and Fort Grant

where there were a lot of young single men in need of farm and garden produce. Some of the Saints sold loads of corded wood or cut prairie hay to the forts or provided freighting services for them. In contrast to the region surrounding the remote Little Colorado settlements, where there were no military outposts and where there was comparatively little US governmental influence, there was a strong federal presence in Gila Valley. Enlisted men helped build roads and maintain order; federal appointees maintained branches of the General Land Office, supervised territorial courts and penitentiaries, established mail routes and hired postal employees, and helped create a relatively safe and inviting environment.²⁰

Mining settlements in the area constituted another important market for goods produced by the Gila Valley Saints, given that most miners were single men who had no time to garden or farm. After a time, logging was begun on Graham Mountain, and some Latter-day Saints found summer jobs at lumber camps or at nearby sawmills producing lumber and shingles.²¹

Despite their comparative poverty, Saints remaining in Gila Valley were determined to foster arts and culture. By the mid-1880s they had established a dramatic club. Peter McBride received the calling to teach music classes for children and adults; classes

*Settlers at Forest Dale
were driven out by
Indian raids.*





Joy Dunyon



George Cluff

School name changed to Gila Academy and moved to a new building later known as Old Main

were held at Graham, Layton, Thatcher, Central, Pima and Matthewsville. Cantatas, operettas, spring festivals, and dramas were produced; choirs were organized. Social and cultural activities were frequent, and the Gila Valley Saints began cultivating meaningful use of leisure time.²²

Among both Saints and Gentiles, President Christopher Layton was an important force for development and progress. He established a stage line running from Bowie to Globe. In Pima, he built an ice house to preserve dairy products, planted fruit orchards, opened a store, founded a grist mill, and encouraged people to build quality homes, develop new farmland, and open businesses. With his encouragement, the first hotel in the valley was built at Thatcher.²³

But perhaps Layton's most enduring accomplishment, his most important effort to advance the development of the Gila Valley Saints, was his work in establishing the St. Joseph Stake Academy in December 1890 with Joy Dunyon of Utah as principal. The school opened in the Central Ward meetinghouse with seventeen students, but in February 1891, it was moved to the Thatcher Ward. The school curriculum incorporated all grade levels from early primary through high school. By the end of the first term—occurring in late spring 1892—enrollment had increased to nearly eighty.²⁴

Over the next five years, enrollment fluctuated according to donations and parental ability to cover tuition costs, often paid in kind. In 1892 a permanent academy building was constructed in Thatcher, and George Cluff—also of Utah—replaced Dunyon as principal. Academy courses were typical of the time period: arithmetic, reading, writing, history, geography, physiology, book-keeping, orthography, and theology.²⁵

In 1895 Cluff was succeeded by Thomas Williams, and the academy was divided into three levels or “departments”: primary, intermediate, and secondary intermediate. In early 1896 Williams announced that the school would close for three weeks because of a local flu epidemic. But because of



Thomas Williams



financial strains resulting from the national depression of 1896–1897, the school did not reopen for nearly three years.²⁶

When Layton became seriously ill in late 1897, he was released as stake president and replaced by Andrew Kimball in January 1898. Kimball, a man of great “energy and enthusiasm,” was “determined that the academy should be made to succeed.”²⁷ He worked tirelessly to generate support for the academy among Gila Valley Saints and hired Emil Maeser, son of famed Utah educator Karl G. Maeser, as principal. Kimball and Maeser traveled throughout the Arizona and Mexican colonies to recruit students and garner parental support. There were one hundred thirty students enrolled in September 1898; one hundred fifty were enrolled in September 1899 and an additional fifty students were added as the academic year progressed. From that point forward, the school flourished.²⁸

In 1911 the growing academy moved to a new building—subsequently known as Old Main—and the school’s name was changed to Gila Academy. Primary and intermediate courses were dropped about this time, and junior college classes were gradually added to the high school curriculum. The school was later reconfigured as a teachers’ school and renamed Gila Normal College. It continued as a Church academy until 1933 when it was turned over to the state of Arizona and renamed Eastern Arizona Junior College.²⁹ At that time high school classes were dropped from its curriculum. In 1966 it became Eastern Arizona College, offering a variety of two-year degrees and certificate programs, together with selected bachelor’s and master’s programs through affiliation with Northern Arizona University.³⁰

For more than a century, the school has helped prepare young people for jobs or additional education. During the academy’s early years, young men often received calls to attend the academy, and those considered potential missionaries enrolled in mis-

Karl Emil Maeser



Andrew Kimball



sionary preparation classes there. Most crucially, the school has long been a unifying cultural, social, and religious force in the valley.³¹

In conjunction with his early vision of the academy, Christopher Layton’s openmindedness, tolerance, and forbearance enabled fellow Saints to accept and work harmoniously with their neighbors who were not members of the Church. Simultaneously, Layton’s capacity to make close friends of his non-Latter-day Saint neighbors garnered respect for and goodwill toward the Saints. As a result,

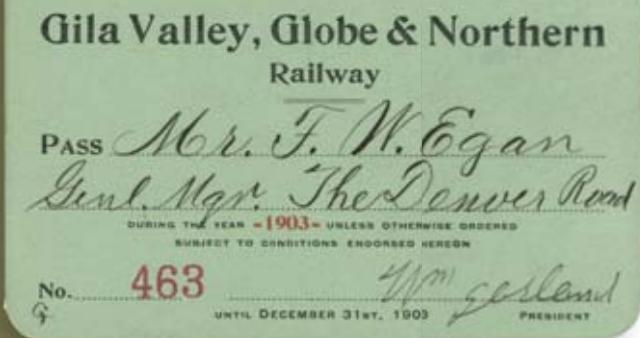
*businessmen outside the Church continued to bid successfully for the Mormons’ patronage. They occasionally attended Mormon church services. Practically all the Valley, regardless of religious affiliation, attended Mormon celebrations and public entertainments. The academy solicited students without restrictions; theology classes were not required, and non-Mormons were welcome. Quite a few enrolled. The school occasionally furnished the entertainments for social affairs of non-Mormon groups. Professor Maeser was elected president of the County Farmers Institute which sponsored an annual county fair for—and provided services to—all farmers in the valley.*³²

This important element of the Layton legacy also endures through the present day.

A major factor in bringing economic success to the valley was the construction of the Gila Valley and Northern Railroad, commonly known as the Gila Railway. Construction began in early February



Gila Valley Globe
Northern Railroad,
west of Safford,
Arizona, ca. 1895



1894 at Bowie.³³ The initial leg extended sixty-two miles to Fort Thomas. The next leg extended to Geronimo, but further construction was held up when the San Carlos Indians refused to allow tracks across their reservation. Eventually, agreements were reached, and on the last day of 1898, the first train arrived at the station in Globe.³⁴

Gila Valley and Northern hired many Latter-day Saint men to engineer grades and lay tracks; after the rail line was

finished, Latter-day Saint men piled wood along the track right-of-way to fuel engines. In 1904 Arizona Eastern Railroad took over the line; in 1924 Arizona Eastern became part of Southern Pacific Transcontinental Railroad.³⁵ The railroad, which provided vital links to outside markets, was key to Graham County's growth and economic progress. Gila Valley's Latter-day Saint pioneers and their descendants could now reap economic rewards for the dedication and sacrifices required to establish their valley home.

But the truer rewards are in the social and spiritual fabric of the Gila Valley itself. Pioneer integrity, faith, and harmony still prevail. Neighborhoods and towns are cooperative and close-knit. A beautiful temple unites Latter-day Saints and is a reminder to all valley residents of the resilience and conviction of their forebears. The small towns of the valley have produced giants: men and women who have blessed state, national, and international society and the worldwide Church of Jesus Christ. More important still, these same small towns are filled with women and men who quietly mirror the ideals of their ancestors in nurturing vibrant, believing, and enduring families and in creating a better world. □

1 Grace McBride Larson and Laura McBride Smith, "St. Joseph Stake Grows from Humble Beginnings," unpublished ms., n.d., unpaginated; original in Pima Library, Pima, Graham County, Arizona.

2 Grace McBride Larson and Laura McBride Smith, "In the Beginning," *Life Story of Matthewsville*, unpublished ms., n.d., unpaginated; original in Pima Library, Pima, Graham County, Arizona.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 Larson and Smith, *Life Story*, "Story of Lehi Larson, Jr." and "Cluff Camp, Show Low Creek," notes, 19 Mar 1879; Edres Barney, "History of Pima's Founding," *Eastern Arizona Courier* (10 Apr 2016): online. The Jesse N. Smith quotation is in Barney. Both Dall and Weech were married, but their respective families had remained in Utah while the two men established homes in Arizona; the Sessions brothers were both unmarried.

6 Larson and Smith, *Life Story*, "Mother Nature Takes a Hand." Barney says lot 63 was set aside as the town square, not lot 6.

7 Larson and Smith, *Life Story*, "Arizona's Oldest School House."

8 Barney, online.

9 Larson and Smith, *Life Story*, "Coleman B. Boren Story."

10 Larson and Smith, *Life Story*, "Matthews Branch of Pima Ward."

11 Larson and Smith, *Life Story*, "Hannah Jorgenson Story."

12 Larson and Smith, *Life Story*, "Christopher Layton, First President of St. Joseph Stake of Zion." A Mormon Battalion veteran, Layton was a close friend of Philemon C. Merrill (also a Battalion veteran), who founded St. David, named for Elder David W. Patten, killed at the Battle of Crooked River in 1838.

13 Andrew Jenson, *Encyclopedic History of the Church* (1941), 870.

14 Initially, the local congregation had been organized as the Matthews Branch of Pima Ward; Matthewsville was located three miles west of Pima

and was later renamed Glenbar.

15 Larson and Smith, *Life Story*, "Life Sketches of Martin Larson" and "Life Sketch of Charles Amasa Mathews Sr."

16 Larson and Smith, *Life Story*, "The Big Flood 1905" and "Peter McBride III."

17 Larson and Smith, *Life Story*, "Hannah Jorgenson," "Life Story of Edna Catherine Carter Follett," "Peter McBride III," and "Joseph Foster Story."

18 Quoted in Jill B. Adair, "Gila Valley: Remember the Faith," *Church News*, 16 Feb 2009, *TheChurchNews.com*, Archives, online.

19 Larson and Smith, *Life Story*, "Life Story of Mary Jane Barney Carpenter."

20 Larson and Smith, *Life Story*, "Life Sketch of Charles Amasa Mathews Sr." and "John Henry Nash."

21 Larson and Smith, *Life Story*, "An Old Photo" and "Life Sketch of Edwin Lavon Carter."

22 Larson and Smith, *Life Story*, "Music Schools Popular in Early Days" and "Short Sketch of the Life of Peter Howard McBride."

23 Larson and Smith, *Life Story*, "In the Beginning."

24 Oran A. Williams, "Settlement and Growth of the Gila Valley in Graham County as a Mormon Colony, 1879–1900," MA thesis, U of Arizona (1937), 59–60.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid.

27 Williams 61.

28 Williams 60–2; Larsen and Smith, *Life Story*, "Lest We Forget."

29 Williams 60–1; "Brief EAC History," *Eastern Arizona College, About EAC*, *EAC.edu*, online; Larsen and Smith, *Life Story*, "Lest We Forget."

30 "Brief EAC History," online.

31 Williams 61; Larson and Smith, *Life Story*, "Story of Lehi Larson" and "Story of David Henry Matthews Family."

32 Williams 61–2.

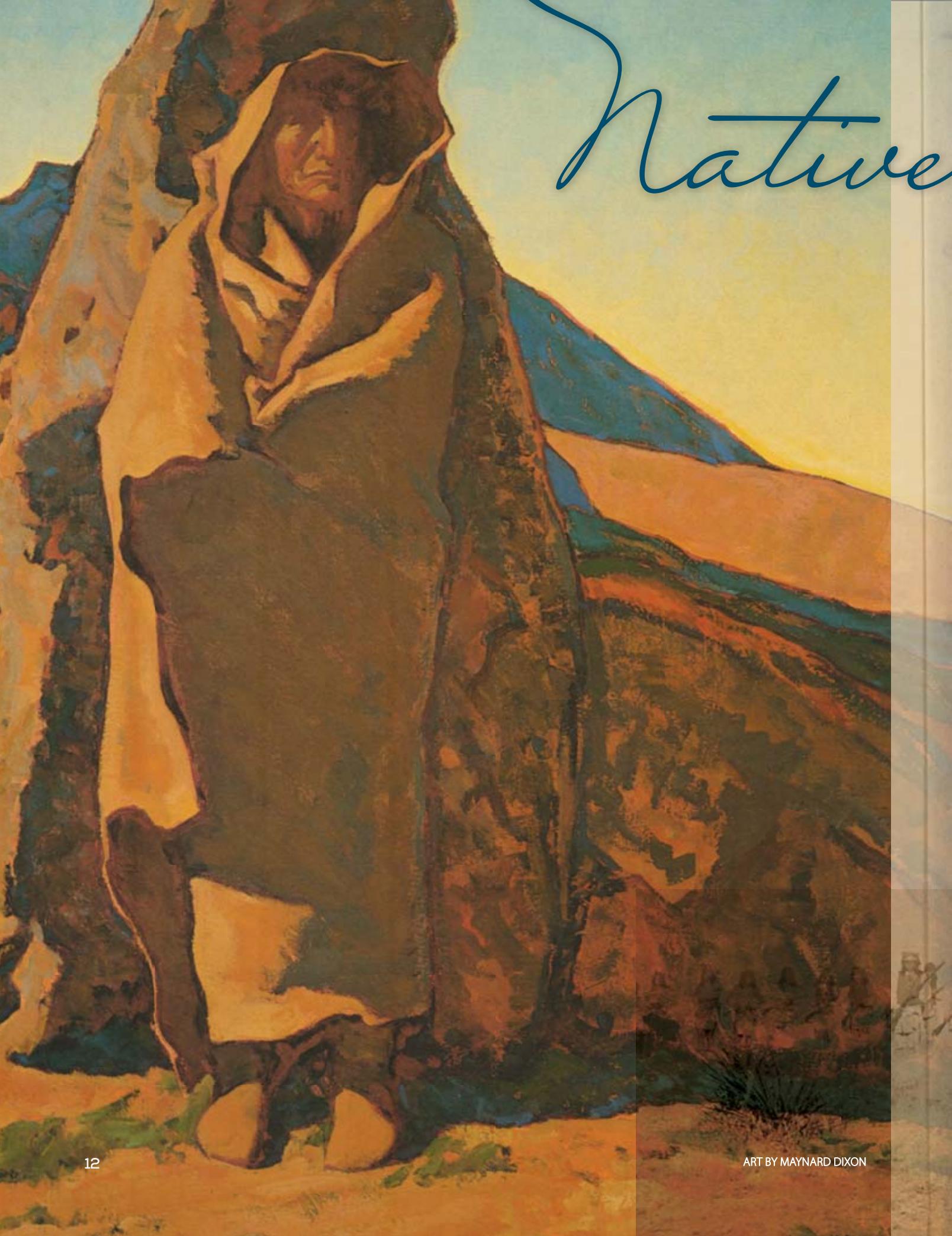
33 Larson and Smith, *Life Story*, "Historical Background of the Globe Branch Line, 1894 to 1914."

34 Ibid.

35 Larson and Smith, *Life Story*, "Milestones Since the Beginning," January 1, 1970.



Crossing the Gila River

A painting of a Native American man in a traditional robe standing in a landscape. The man is the central figure, wearing a dark, textured robe with a light-colored, patterned shawl draped over his shoulders. He has a serious expression and is looking slightly to the right. The background features a vast, rolling landscape with hills and mountains under a clear sky. The lighting suggests a bright, possibly sunrise or sunset, casting long shadows and highlighting the textures of the man's clothing and the terrain.

Native

Neighbors

SAFFORD AND LAYTON

BY KEITH LAWRENCE

The very early history of Gila Valley, Arizona, is relatively simple and straightforward. A variety of Indigenous peoples settled, hunted in, and farmed the region for many, many centuries before the American West was explored and settled by European Americans. Indigenous societies were advanced, and their sacred sites, together with prehistoric and historic remains of their homes and communal places, dot the region. The first non-Indigenous settlers in the valley were Hispanics, a few of whom arrived early in the nineteenth century.

The history of European American settlement of Gila Valley is strangely elusive. There seem to be as many different character sets and central narratives as there are websites ready to provide “true” accounts of this history. Perhaps the first European American in the valley was William Munson who,

in 1873, built a small adobe house and store at what was initially called Munsonville toward the southern end of the valley. After the Jewish entrepreneur Isadore Elkan Solomon and his family arrived in Munsonville during the mid-1870s, the community became Solomonville. The modest adobe home Solomon initially built was only the sixth residence in town.¹

Safford was established in 1874 and 1875 by a small group of California men who, during the Civil War, had served in companies F and H of the Fourth California Volunteer Infantry stationed at Fort Yuma in southwestern Arizona. The group—which likely included Joshua Eaton Bailey, Hiram Kennedy, Daniel Hughes, H. J. Davis, and John Glasby—believed the area around present-day Safford held great promise for farming, ranching, and trade. These five men were single when they founded Safford, although Hughes married in 1879 and Bailey in 1890.²

Bailey named the settlement Safford in honor of Arizona's territorial governor,

ANSON PACELY KILLEN

SAFFORD, who visited the growing community several times during his governorship and encouraged the settlers in their pioneering work. Other Anglos soon joined the small commu-



nity, including the families of **EDWARD TUTTLE** and Amos Perigo. Because Tuttle was his close friend, Bailey had been especially determined to recruit him away from northern California as a Safford co-founder.

When Tuttle and his small family arrived in March 1878, they were perhaps the only Anglo family in the settlement; at that time, all other Anglo inhabitants were single men. Land speculator William H. Kirkland had volunteered just weeks before to survey and lay out the town—which must have looked desolate and unpromising to Tuttle’s wife Marietta. Scattered adobe homes dotted the few dusty and mostly treeless streets. There were two businesses: a modest grist mill being built by a Tucson firm and Bailey’s small store—housed in one room of his own adobe house. Bailey loaned the other two rooms to the Tuttles until their own home was built. Bailey and Tuttle then partnered as managers of a combined general store, post office, and saloon—the latter two businesses joining the first in Bailey’s original adobe “cabin.” Informally, the three-business venture was known as Bailey & Tuttle’s. Officially, it was Bailey who served as Safford’s first postmaster. Tuttle, who had political experience as an Arizona territorial legislator in 1864, was named Safford’s justice of the peace in 1879; he was also a teacher at Safford’s first primary school.³

During its early history Safford was not an especially safe community. Just five months after the Tuttles’ arrival, and shortly after they had moved into their own home, they awoke to a horrifying sight. The previous day, a man named Oliver McCoy had shot and killed another man in Safford. McCoy had then bolted, but local citizens mounted up and gave chase. After McCoy was captured, some citizens insisted that he be held for trial in



Edward Tuttle’s home was built by Joshua Eaton Bailey



Tucson. But others, wanting an immediate resolution, wrested McCoy away and lynched him. When the Tuttle family arose the following morning, they saw the body of McCoy hanging from the mesquite tree in their back yard—apparently the largest of the mesquites in the area. The experience was traumatic, and the young Tuttle girls tried for the rest of their lives to unsee what vigilante neighbors had forced them to gaze upon.⁴

Two months later, on an early November 1878 morning, a certain Theodore Brown was playing cards with town-founder Hiram Kennedy in the Bailey-Tuttle saloon. The two got into a drunken argument, and Brown stabbed Kennedy, killing him. Tuttle served on the ad hoc jury that convicted Brown and sent him to Tucson to serve out his sentence. After only months, however, Brown escaped from the Tucson prison and was never recaptured—and never again seen in Graham County.⁵

In early 1879 Lorenzo Sanchez established Sanchez, Arizona, about four miles east of Safford, and Hispanic individuals and families from neighboring New Mexico began settling there. Other New Mexico immigrants established San Jose just southwest of Sanchez. Today, only a handful of people remain in Sanchez; San Jose has a population of just under five hundred.⁶



**DURING ITS EARLY
HISTORY SAFFORD WAS
NOT AN ESPECIALLY
SAFE COMMUNITY.**

Many other individuals and families soon immigrated to the Safford area. The first officially sanctioned Latter-day Saint settlement was established in April 1879 by the families of Joseph Knight Rogers, William R. Teebles, and several others. This settlement, about seven miles northwest of Safford, was initially named Smithville and later Pima. Other Latter-day Saint settlements followed.

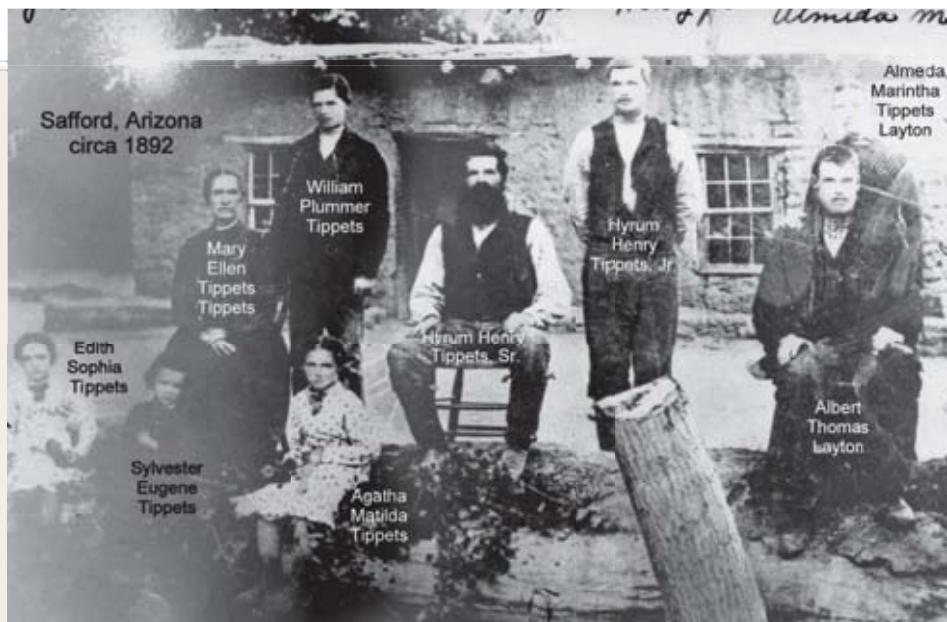
In early 1880 Joseph and David Matthews began farms in what would become Glenbar, just north of Pima. In November of that year, George Lake, Andrew Anderson, and George Skinner scouted the area and purchased what was known as the old Rustlers Ranch east of Pima. The following January their families and the families of three other men established the community of Graham. During the spring of 1881 Eden, just northwest of Pima, was founded by Moses Curtis and William Hawkins. Thatcher, four miles southeast of Pima

and three miles northwest of Safford, was begun by John M. Moody in 1881. Central—about midway between and Thatcher and Pima—was settled in late 1882, and in early 1883, Ebenezer Bryce and his family established Bryce directly north of Pima.⁷

Safford's status as county seat was short-lived. In 1883 **ISADORE SOLOMON**—a powerful economic and political force in Gila Valley—negotiated the move of the county seat to Solomonville, which remained the political center of Graham County for the next thirty-two years. After Safford was restored as county seat in 1915, Solomon and his wife began selling their Arizona holdings, and in 1919 they moved permanently to Los Angeles, California.⁸

One of the most important Latter-day Saint settlements of the early 1880s originated with Hyrum Henry Tippetts's purchase in January 1883 of John Penfold's farm about a mile and a half southeast of Safford. Hyrum Henry was born in Nauvoo, Illinois, in June 1843;⁹ he was six when he crossed the plains in 1849, driving an ox





*Hyrum Henry
Tippets's family,
Safford, Arizona
ca. 1892*

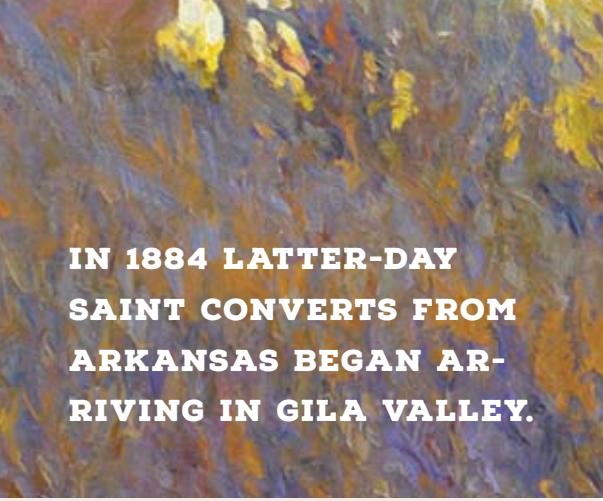
team while walking barefoot most of the way to Salt Lake. He and his parents settled near Brigham City; Hyrum married his second cousin, Mary Ellen Tippets, in 1867. The couple subsequently settled in Box Elder County, Utah, before accepting a call in 1882 to help stabilize the Arizona colonies. As Layton's founder, he was known as a "peaceable, fair minded man" and a man of his word. He established a cabinet and carpentry business near his home; he also managed a small farm and an orchard and garden. According to his daughter Edith, Hyrum was many times "called to arbitrate difficulties between neighbors and families." Six of his eight children survived to adulthood, were married, and were lifelong residents of the original Graham County.¹⁰

A few months after Tippets moved to his new farm, other Saints purchased neighboring land from Edward Tuttle, and the Tippets family was joined by those of brothers John and Adam David Welker, Charles Warner, Mads Madsen, and Charles Olsen. The following spring, the settlement's four dozen members of the Church of Jesus Christ were organized as a branch named Layton in honor of the president of St. Joseph Stake, Christopher Layton. By November 1884 Layton's population had increased to one hundred twenty-five, and Layton Ward was established with John Welker as

its first bishop. By mid-1886 Layton had grown to nearly two hundred twenty.¹¹

Part of Layton's growth derived from its access to necessary irrigation water. Its first Latter-day Saint settlers consolidated a handful of outlets from the Gila River—each of which fed a small ditch—into a single outlet and canal that could feed existing as well as additional ditches. Too, the Montezuma Canal—running east from the river to Solomonville—was enlarged so that it could deliver water to some Layton farms while also meeting the needs of original patrons in Solomonville. While the first Gila Valley Saints rejoiced in fertile land and ample water, a greater influx of Latter-day Saints into agricultural areas of Graham County during the 1880s and 1890s created late-summer water shortages that were painstakingly resolved over many years.¹²

During 1884 a group of Latter-day Saint converts sometimes called the "Arkansas Pioneers" or the "Arkansas Travelers" began arriving in Gila Valley. These Saints—originally comprising twenty-seven families and one hundred twenty-five individuals—had immigrated from Des Arc, Prairie County, Arkansas, where they had been taught the restored gospel by two missionaries of the Church of Jesus Christ, Henry G. Boyle and J. D. H. McAlister. The missionaries had arrived in Des Arc in December 1875, initially teaching and baptizing two families they had befriended earlier in Tennessee.



IN 1884 LATTER-DAY SAINT CONVERTS FROM ARKANSAS BEGAN AR- RIVING IN GILA VALLEY.

Gradually, extended family members and neighbors of the two families also expressed interest and were taught and baptized. By the late spring of 1877, however, other neighbors had become increasingly resentful of those who had joined the Church, and persecution became intense. The Arkansas Saints determined to immigrate west to Savoia, New Mexico, selling homes, animals, farms, and possessions at great loss. When they arrived in Savoia, however, even the most hopeful of the Arkansas Saints felt enormous despair. The contrast between verdant Des Arc and the desolate desert terrain of northwestern New Mexico couldn't have been more stark. A majority of these Saints soon moved to the Little Colorado colonies, drawn by friendships and by relative proximity to the center of the Church.¹³

Within two or three years, however, and despite their best efforts, many of the Arkansas Saints could no longer endure the harsh natural environment of the Little Colorado region. Along with a number of northeastern Arizona colonists who immigrated from southern Utah, these Arkansas Saints became convinced that the Gila Valley would prove a more comfortable and hospitable and rewarding place to live and farm. A large number of the Saints originally from Arkansas—including the families of John Jackson Quinn, James Waddell, John Sybert Waddell, John Hugh Evans, Austin Evans, John William Scarlet, Thomas West, James Thomas Madison Talley, Augustus Branch, Alexander Stewart, Alonzo McGrath, Nathan

Wanslee, and others—settled in Layton. Like most other Saints who had arrived in Gila Valley during the previous five years, the Arkansas pioneers were hardy people of the frontier, people of great faith. Despite their poverty, they were embraced by those already in Layton and soon felt at home themselves, quickly becoming valued, contributing members of the community. The majority of them made Gila Valley their permanent home.¹⁴

The Saints in Layton deliberately separated themselves from their near neighbors in Safford. They established their own stores along Layton's Relation Street—the first, a small general store owned by Joseph Wheatley and George Weech—and then along First Street. They maintained a separate school district with distinct curriculum, policies, and expectations. When Union Canal was completed from Layton and Safford northeast to Thatcher in 1886, its east-west segment was embraced by Layton's citizens as a physical barrier between the two communities. Safford and Solomonville were viewed as strongholds of temptation and sin, and the youth of Layton (and all Latter-day Saint colonies) were instructed to avoid their "Gentile dances" and other worldly attractions. Through the 1880s and 1890s and into the early twentieth century, religious instruction to youth focused on full abstinence from alcohol and tobacco, the preserva-



LDS Church, Layton, Arizona, ca. 1902





Center and wearing a black hat and white whiskers, John Jackson Quinn, age 91 is surround by family members that were part of the Arkansas Saints that settled in Graham County

tion of sexual purity, and a turning from popular fashion and other distractions encouraging pride and prodigality. Layton residents made a point of emphasizing that theirs was a true family community—and that saloons, dance halls, brothels, and other iniquitous establishments were peculiar to the Gentile town to the north.¹⁵

Within a year of the construction of the Union Canal, however, new wooden footbridges enabled pedestrian traffic between Safford and Layton. Horse-and-wagon bridges followed two or three years later at both Graham Street and First Street. And in 1896 a wide modern bridge connected a new road in Safford running directly south from the train station to Church Street in Layton—which, as its name suggests, incorporated Layton's religious center. These physical bridges also served as the first metaphorical ties between the two distinctive communities.¹⁶

Especially after the St. Joseph Stake Academy, later the Gila Academy, became a post-secondary institution during the early twentieth century, there was intensified pressure on Layton's internal school district to fund and build a public high school. Lacking resources to do so independently and, recognizing the economic inefficiency of

having separate public high schools in Layton and Safford, officials in Layton conferred with Safford officials about launching a joint public high school. These conversations led to others focused on the feasibility of merging the Safford and Layton school districts—which occurred about 1912. The union high school opened in Safford in 1915.¹⁷

The communities were soon sharing other resources as well, and both physical and intangible barriers between them melted away. In May 1944 Layton was officially annexed by the Safford City Council; the two communities had informally become one many years earlier. Safford's historical downtown remains the city's most vibrant business district; since 1920, roughly seventy percent of all new homes in Safford have been built within what was once Layton. In addition to being Graham County's political center, Safford is also its largest, most diverse, most eclectic community—a community founded on the values and histories of its once-divergent halves.¹⁸ □

1 "Graham County," from print histories by Hubert Howe Bancroft, Sidney R. DeLong, and Harold E. Herbert, *AZGenWeb, HometownChronicles.com* (2015); Regina Merwin, curator, "Isadore and Anna Solomon: Founders of



IN MAY 1944 LAYTON WAS OFFICIALLY ANNEXED BY THE SAFFORD CITY COUNCIL

Solomonville, Arizona Territory," *Jewish Museum of the American West, JMAW.org* (2013); both online.

2 David P. Robrock, "Edward D. Tuttle: Soldier, Pioneer, Historian," *Journal of Arizona History*, 30.1 (Sp 1989): 28–9, 33, 36, 40–1; "Graham County," online; "Joshua Eaton Bailey" and "Harry Cisneros Hughes" [son of Daniel Hughes], *FindAGrave.com*, online; "Daniel Hughes," "John Coon Glasby," "H. J. Davis," and "Hiram Kennedy," *FamilySearch.org*, online; 1880 US Census, Pima, AZ, online. The other three men never married. H. J. Davis, for example, is shown in the 1880 US Census (Pima, Arizona) as being sixty-five years old and never married; he has an eighteen-year-old adopted son named Otto, whose biological father was clearly not Davis.

3 Robrock 32–3, 44, 46; "Graham County," online. Tuttle was hired as schoolteacher in October 1880; he was paid \$75 a month (about \$2,250 in *inflated* value in 2022; in *income*

value, closer to \$3,000/month).

4 Robrock 41.

5 Robrock 42.

6 "Graham County," online.

7 Oran A. Williams, "Settle-

ment and Growth of the Gila Valley in Graham County as a Mormon Colony, 1879 to 1900," MA thesis, University of Arizona (1937), 10–6.

8 Merwin, online.

9 "Hiram Henry Tippets" and "Mary Ellen Tippets Tippets," *FindAGrave.com*, online; Edith Sophia Tippets Quinn, "Life Sketch of Hyrum Henry Tippets Sr.," *Hyrum Henry Tippets Sr., Memories, FamilySearch.com*, online. Hyrum's father, Joseph Harrison Tippets, joined the Church as a single man in his early twenties, immigrating from his native New York first to Clinton County, Missouri, and then to Nauvoo, Illinois. He was married three times (consecutively); he had fifteen children, twelve of whom survived to adulthood. Although his mother, Abigail Lewis Tippets, was never baptized a member of the Church, at her son's urging, she immigrated West with the Saints, settling near Joseph in northern Utah.

10 Quinn, online. Five of the six

surviving children settled in eastern Graham County, perhaps drawn there by opportunities associated with copper mining. The eastern segment of Graham County (along the New Mexico border) became a separate county, Greenlee County, in 1907.

11 Williams 16, 35. After having founded Kaysville and neighboring Layton in Utah's Davis County, and after having become a successful farmer and businessman Christopher Layton was persuaded by Church leaders to move to Arizona in February 1883, to accept the calling as first president of the St. Joseph Stake and to do all in his power to build the Saints and colonies of southeastern Arizona. Layton used personal funds of \$20,000 (with an *inflated* worth of about \$600,000 today—but a comparative *income* worth of about \$4 million) to buy two thousand acres of land and establish a grist mill; Layton resold the land in small parcels to incoming Saints at prices just over what he paid per acre and helped keep the southeastern colonies unified and appropriately focused on faith, service, and productive growth (Williams 31–2; *MeasuringWorth.com*, online).

12 Williams 16, 23–4, 49–51; Danny Haralson, "Did You Know: How Safford Swallowed up Layton," *East Arizona Courier* (2 Sep 2015): *Lifestyle* 1, online.

13 LaVon Evans Taylor, "The Arkansas Journey," *John Jackson Quinn, Memories, FamilySearch.com*, online.

14 Haralson, online; Taylor, online.

15 Haralson, online; Williams 62–3.

16 Haralson, online.

17 James Earl Gonzalez, *Bulldogs Forever: A History of Safford High School, 1915–2007* (2007), 39; Haralson, online.

18 Haralson, online.

Safford Main Street, ca. 1914



JOSEPH KNIGHT ROGERS

*Josephine Augusta Wall, Louisa
Christina Roseberry, Mary Emma Fuller*



*Excerpted from a history by
Helen Viola William Crandall,
granddaughter, and edited by
William W. Tanner*

Joseph Knight Rogers was born December 20, 1844, the third child of Ross Ransom Rogers and Helen Moffat Curtis. The family, eventually consisting of eleven children, lived in Washington, Putnam County, Indiana, at the time. Like many other early Latter-day Saints, the Rogers family suffered through the Missouri and Illinois periods and joined the Saints in the trek westward. Shortly after arriving in Utah, the Rogers family were called to help settle Parowan, Utah.

In July 1869, Joseph, then twenty-five, married Josephine Wall and moved to Wallsburg, Utah, a small northern Utah community named for Josephine's father, William Madison Wall. Joseph and Josephine's first child was born the following year, and in 1871 Joseph helped build a needed sawmill at Wallsburg.



Josephine Augusta Wall

In 1875 Joseph moved to Prattville, Utah in Sevier County. Shortly after his arrival he was ordained a high priest and appointed bishop of Prattville Ward. When the community folded in 1877 Joseph moved his family to nearby Glenwood. After a brief return to Wallsburg, the family decided to answer a call to help settle southeast Arizona.

In March 1879 Joseph, Josephine, and their three children began the journey to Arizona's Gila Valley. Joseph had been called as the presiding elder of a small company of families and single men comprising twenty-nine persons in all. The first thing company members did after arriving in Gila Valley in early April was to burn the tall grass in the vicinity of their campsite, driving away insects and snakes. They then pitched tents and laid out a

town site, numbering each lot.

The company worked together to build cabins, and the first finished was that of the Rogers family. Like other homes, it had a "combination

roof" of willows, tall rush grass, and finer grass mixed with clay, mud, and dry earth to keep out the rain.

Sunday church meetings were first held in the Rogers home and later in the home of his first counselor, William R. Teeple, even though neither home was completed when the first meetings were held. As other settlers began arriving in the valley, the need grew for a larger place of worship. When completed in the fall of 1879, this building served as both a church and a school.

The river water was not considered healthful, so the settlers dug a public well directly in front of the Rogers home. Water barrels were hauled on a "lizard," a forked tree branch with a stake at the back to keep the barrel from slipping. Cows and other stock were kept in a public corral at night, and settlers went there to milk their cows in the evening. During the day all stock was turned out to forage; children herded them to keep them from straying.

As other settlers joined this first Latter-day Saint settlement in Gila Valley and as its numbers grew, it was named Smithville in honor

“the Father of Graham County”

of Snowflake Stake president Jesse N. Smith. In September 1880 the Smithville Ward was organized as part of the Snowflake Stake, and Joseph Rogers was set apart as its first bishop.

At a territorial nominating convention held in Tucson in November 1880, J. B. Collins of nearby Ft. Thomas nominated Joseph Knight to represent his district in the 1881 territorial legislature. Joseph thus became an elected member of the House of Representatives of the Eleventh Legislative Assembly, Territory of Arizona, which convened at Prescott, Arizona, on January 3, 1881. Joseph traveled from Smithville to Prescott on horseback and remained in Prescott for the fourteen weeks of the session. It was here that he introduced the bill creating Graham County out of parts of Pima and Pinal Counties and helped shepherd its passage; he was subsequently recognized as “the Father of Graham County.” His diary entries show that he enjoyed serving in the legislative assembly and that he felt at home there.

Joseph had many skills that endeared him to his family and fellow settlers. He had learned the carpenter trade and blacksmithing from his father and grandfather. Like most men of his day, he had extensive practical training as a farmer. He had frequent part-time work as a freighter, making runs between the rail towns of Wilcox or Bowie and the mining towns of Globe or Miami. Although the road from Wilcox to Globe passed through the Apache Reservation and was often dangerous, Joseph always had his pistol or rifle ready and traveled in groups with



other freighters, teaching his family the importance of wisdom, prayer, and relying on divine protection. And he was in other ways, too, a dedicated and kind husband and father.

Desirous to follow prophetic counsel to bishops and other male leaders to marry more than one wife, Joseph—with Josephine’s consent—married Louisa Christina Roseberry and Mary Emma Fuller on the same late-October day in 1882. Both marriages occurred in the St. George Temple, Louisa’s in the morning and Mary’s in the afternoon. The round trip from Smithville and back took nearly two weeks. On their return home, Joseph arranged separate living quarters for each of his three wives, and he and they willingly accepted the criticism and questions that sometimes followed, believing that plural marriage was divinely inspired.



**Louisa Christina
Roseberry**



Mary Emma Fuller

During his five years as bishop—from 1880 to 1885—Joseph felt a deep responsibility to his flock and spent many hours in service and prayer. Concurrently, he held many civic offices on election boards, school boards, and canal boards. He was again elected to the territorial legislature in 1897 and supported bills favorable to the territory’s moral and economic progress. Always, he accepted each position with grace and fulfilled it with honor.

In the fall of 1906 Joseph and his son Tommy went to Douglas, Arizona, where small construction firms were actively recruiting skilled builders. Joseph was hired as a carpenter on a building job in Pirtleville, just northwest of Douglas. The workmen rode a trolley car between Douglas and Pirtleville, and as the car neared a curve on the outskirts of Pirtleville, it slowed considerably so that the workers could hop off. In mid-December Joseph was standing on the steps of the car, preparing to step off, when the streetcar lurched, unbalancing him, and his head hit a trolley post. He was immediately taken to the Calumet Hospital in Douglas, but died the following night, on December 17. He was laid to rest in the

Pima Cemetery he himself had created many years earlier on Rogers land. □

*This article is excerpted and adapted from Helen Viola William Crandall [granddaughter], “J. K. Rogers Life Story,” *Memories, “Joseph Knight Rogers,”* FamilySearch.org, online.*



**Originally
named
“Smithville”**



PIMA PIONEER

Sarah Ann Dall Weech Recalls Experiences of First Settlers



*Moses and Rebecca Cluff were early settlers of Pima, Arizona.
The first Cluff home is pictured above, ca. 1885.*



In an April 13, 1939 interview in the Tucson newspaper *Arizona Daily Star*, ninety-year-old Sarah Ann Dall Weech painted in colorful detail the joys and hardships of the original Pima settlers. Marking the sixtieth anniversary celebration of the founding of the town, the article highlighted the reminiscences of its oldest living pioneer. Wife of Hyrum Weech, Mary was thirty-one and the mother of eight children when the Weech family, with four other “first families” of Pima, left Utah for the Gila Valley in Arizona. “We were so tired of the cold winters in Utah,” Mary explained.

With a sick child in her arms and her remaining children in the bed of the wagon, Mary “drove a horse team all of the way except over one hill just after crossing the Big Colorado. . . . It was quite a task for me to drive the team and take care of the children,” she said, “but I got along very well. We had a snow-storm along the Sevier River, but we had a good tent which we pitched every night, and we were comfortable.” Her husband drove two yokes of oxen hitched to a wagon which carried their supplies, with a cow tied to the back of one of the wagons.

After crossing the Gila mountains, “we came in full view of the Gila valley, with the river winding through it, fringed on both sides with cottonwood and willow trees, and its floor covered with groves of mesquite trees and stretches of open grass.

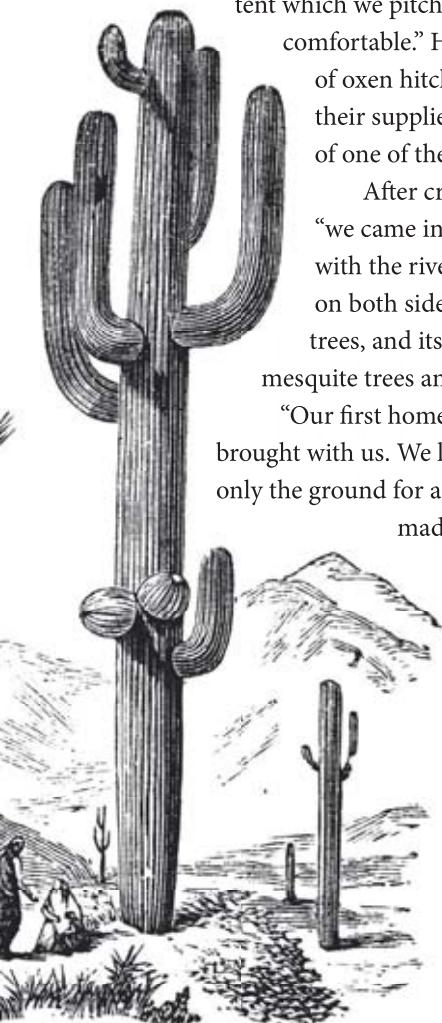
“Our first home was the tent which we had brought with us. We lived in it a year. We had only the ground for a floor, and our first table was made of four posts driven into the ground with a dry goods box turned over them. They were building a canal, and my husband worked on it with the other men and put in crops and made

fences. We traded a wagon for some grain, beans, and flour. Later we built a log house, one end of which was to be used for a store. When it was finished, I went with my husband to Tucson, where we bought some goods for the store.

“At Tucson, we were told that there had been an Indian raid and that the entire population of the Gila valley had been wiped out. You can imagine our feelings, with all our children left behind at Smithville [early name for Pima]. It was a happy relief to find the rumor was false.

“I was the clerk in the new store. Prices were so high that several women would club together to buy a package of soda, and I would measure it out by the spoonful. Thread was 25 cents a spool. My husband had to make frequent trips to Tucson for goods. There was no railroad and he had to travel alone. The Indians were killing people on all sides of us and were waylaying travelers and stealing their teams all the time. I never knew, when I would say good-bye to him, whether I would ever see him alive again, but I put my trust in the Lord and he always came home to us safe and sound.

“I was afraid, too, for ourselves. Lumber was high—a hundred dollars a thousand at the mill in the mountains—and we could not afford enough for doors. Windows were out of the question. We used quilts for doors and domestic muslin for windows. To protect the store, I would make my bed in the doorway. Such was life in those days. Six of the people



ENGRAVING BY DEPOSITPHOTOS.COM



Early photos of Hyrum and Sarah Ann Dall Weech

of our little town were killed by Indians, and many lost their horses and cattle to rustlers."

Snakes, centipedes, scorpions and tarantulas were "rather bad. . . . I went to the cupboard one day to get one of the children a bit of bread, and there lay a snake curled up on one of the shelves. It turned out to be harmless, but I was scared just the same—as one will be of a snake.

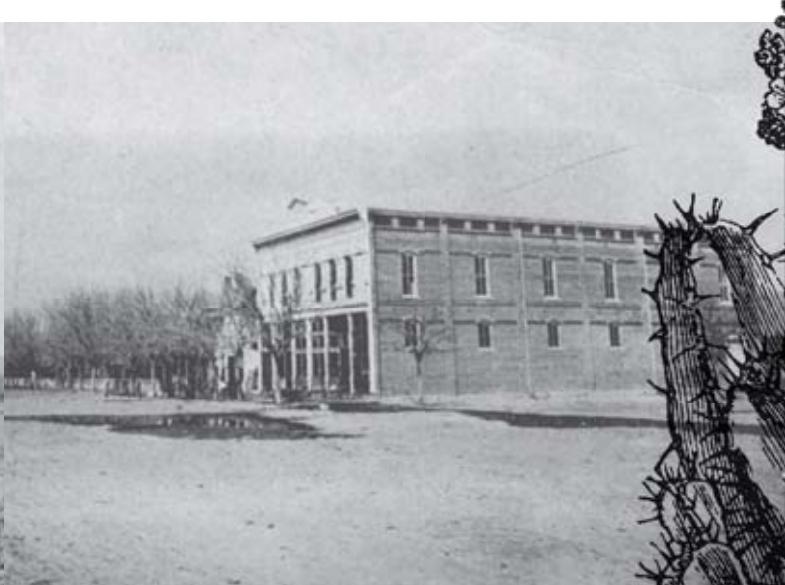
"Our furniture was mostly homemade and, of course, rather crude. I had a one-legged bed, made by boring two holes in the wall and fastening poles in them, one lengthwise at the head of the bed and the other crosswise at the foot, and supported at the center front of the bed by a leg. A cleat was nailed to the wall and slats laid across the bed. I had brought half of a cupboard from Utah; I got one of the men in town to make an upper part for it. I got a log and with the help of my girls sawed it into the right lengths for seats. I made some whitewash out of wood ashes and whitewashed the walls. I had brought a rag carpet from Utah. We gathered some wild hay and spread it over the dirt floor and put the carpet over it. My husband made us some pegs and we fastened it down with them.

"A hard life? Well, perhaps, but a good life, too. We had enough to eat most of the time. We had good friends and neighbors and we had our church. Above



everything else, we had our children. As time went on we prospered. We built our new home, and out of the time we've been here, I've spent at least twenty-two summers among the pines on Mount Graham. In the early years we used to go up Nuttall Canyon where the sawmill was that my husband and some other men owned. Later on, we built a home on the summit and named it Columbine. It's still called that—Camp Columbine. We had pigs, chickens and cows up there, and one summer I made 500 pounds of butter and at least 40 pounds of cheese, which I sold.

"The best of it all was that our family ties grew close and strong. In January 1931, a few months after our sixty-fourth wedding anniversary, my life's companion was taken in death. After so many years together, it is hard to be left alone. I'll stop talking now. His life was so much a part of my own that anything that has happened since doesn't seem to matter very much." □



Main Street, Pima, Arizona ca. 1900. Left: Marshall Hotel and Wilford Taft Webb Building; right: Hyrum Weech Store



Pioneer Day Celebration, Pima, Arizona, ca. 1905

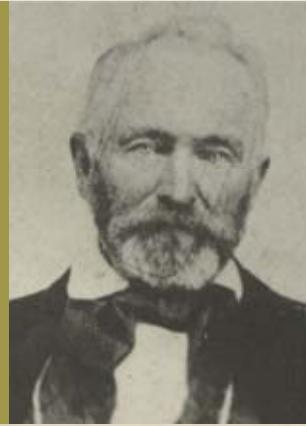
*“A hard life? Well, perhaps, but a good life, too.
We had enough to eat most of the time.”*



Hyrum and Sarah Weech cabin in Mount Graham, ca. 1897

JOSEPH LAZARUS MATTHEWS

*Rhoda Carrol, Polly Boss,
Martha Jane Potter*



By Wayne Hinton

Joseph Lazarus Matthews, great-great-grandfather of my late wife, Carolyn, was a faithful Latter-day Saint pioneer. He is buried in the small Matthewsville Cemetery, and our family took a trip in 1988 to Graham County in Arizona's Gila Valley to locate the graves of Joseph and his second wife, Polly. The search was surprisingly difficult, but there was a reward: we found and talked to many of Carolyn's distant relatives still living in the area and came home with a large box of local and family history memorabilia.

Joseph Matthews was born January 29, 1809, in Johnson County, North Carolina.¹ At age twenty-three he married the first of his three wives, Rhoda Carrol, when she was fifteen. Later, at age thirty-nine, he married

Polly Boss, who was then eighteen, and at age fifty-six he married Martha Jane Potter, who was seventeen. Rhoda bore him five children, Polly nine, and Martha two.²

Shortly after his marriage to Rhoda in 1832 the couple moved to Neshoba County, Mississippi, where Joseph engaged in farming and trading. He was taught the gospel by Elder Benjamin Capp, and he joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1845, sold his holdings in Mississippi, and moved to Nauvoo. He and Rhoda were sealed in the Nauvoo Temple in 1846.³

Joseph served as a scout in the vanguard wagon company of 1847 and as captain of the fourteenth ten, a subset of that company. His family followed him to Utah in 1848 in the Willard Richards Company.⁴

In 1849 Matthews explored southern Utah with the Parley P. Pratt Over-the-Rim Expedition. In 1851 he joined Elders Charles C. Rich and Amasa M. Lyman in colonizing San Bernardino, California. When the colony was recalled in 1857, he settled at Santaquin, Utah. He was later called as a missionary for the Church of Jesus Christ, serving in the Southern States Mission.⁵

Several years after his mission, Joseph and some of his family—including three of his adult sons, David, Solomon, and Charles—were called on a mission to strengthen the southeastern Arizona colonies.⁶ In late 1879, the party reached Nutrioso in northern Arizona where snowy, cold weather stopped their progress for the winter. They paid rent and living expenses by selling cord wood. As the weather improved, they set out for Gila Valley, arriving in March 1880. Rather than settling at Pima, they broke ground on the south bank of the Gila River three miles west of Pima.⁷

They named their settlement Matthewsville. Here their isolated lives were broken only by weekend



Rhoda Carrol



Polly Boss



Martha Jane Potter

**City name changed to Fairview,
and finally Glenbar**



trips to Pima to attend church and to acquire supplies. Their home was a stockade of cottonwood logs standing upright in deep trenches. The door was a hanging quilt; canvas covered the windows. The roof, constructed of limbs covered with layers of dirt, collapsed onto the dirt floor with the first torrential rain.⁸

David and Charles returned to Utah in the fall of 1880 to bring other family members to their little community—David's wife and children and their father's two other wives, Rhoda and Polly. But the arriving family members found Matthewsville hot, dry, and desolate. One of David's sons said he felt as Adam and Eve must have felt after being cast out of the Garden of Eden.⁹

Despite its drawbacks, Matthewsville welcomed new arrivals in 1881 from Brigham City. By 1885 the town had grown large enough to support a branch of the Pima Ward. David Matthews was sustained as presiding elder.¹⁰

Because there were no doctors in Gila Valley, midwives cared for mothers and babies. Joseph's second wife, Polly, was the town midwife and healer. She knew the healing properties of every berry and leaf, and she kept a supply of healing herbs on hand. Anyone hurt or sick—or expecting a baby—went to Polly.

Joseph died suddenly at his home in May 1886, just five years after arriving in Arizona. He was seventy-seven years old. Because there was no cemetery

in Matthewsville, Joseph was buried at Pima. But Polly resolutely homesteaded one hundred sixty acres in Matthewsville and, with the help of her sons, cleared it of mesquite and chaparral. She then donated three acres of her land as a community cemetery and had her husband's body exhumed and moved to Matthewsville.¹¹

Ever resourceful, Polly raised chickens, sold eggs, trapped quail, hunted rabbits, and fished. She bartered what she raised, shot, or caught for groceries, clothing, and household needs. Her home was very modest: a one-room cabin with a tiny lean-to kitchen added on. Polly always paid her tithing in kind. When she died in June 1920 at the age of eighty-nine, she was buried next to her husband.¹²



Joseph and Polly Boss Matthews

In 1909 the US Postal Department changed the name of Matthewsville to Fairview; in 1917 it was changed again to Glenbar.¹³ Despite the name changes, however, the town's sense of community and kinship was never lost. □

1 Grace McBride Larson and Laura McBride Smith, "Joseph L. Matthews, Original Pioneer of Matthewsville," *Life Story of Matthewsville*, unpublished ms., n.d., unpaginated; original in Pima Library, Pima, Graham County, Arizona.

2 Joseph Lazarus Matthews (1809–1886), family group sheet, *FamilySearch.com*; "Joseph Lazarus Matthews (1809–1886)," *FindAGrave.com*; both online.

3 "Biographies of the Original 1847 Pioneer Company," typescript, 36, Church History Library, Salt Lake City, Utah.

4 Ibid.

5 Larsen and Smith, "Joseph L. Matthews, Original Pioneer."

6 The party consisted of Joseph L. Matthews, his third wife Martha, and their ten-year-old son Simon; David Henry Matthews; Solomon Franklin Matthews and his wife Eliza; and Charles Amasa Matthews, who was unmarried (Larsen and Smith, "Joseph L. Matthews, Original Pioneer").

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

9 Larson and Smith, "Lehi Larson Story," *Life Story*.

10 Larson and Smith, "Matthewsville Branch of Pima Ward" and "Matthewsville Ward Reorganized, 12 Mar 1929," *Life Story*.

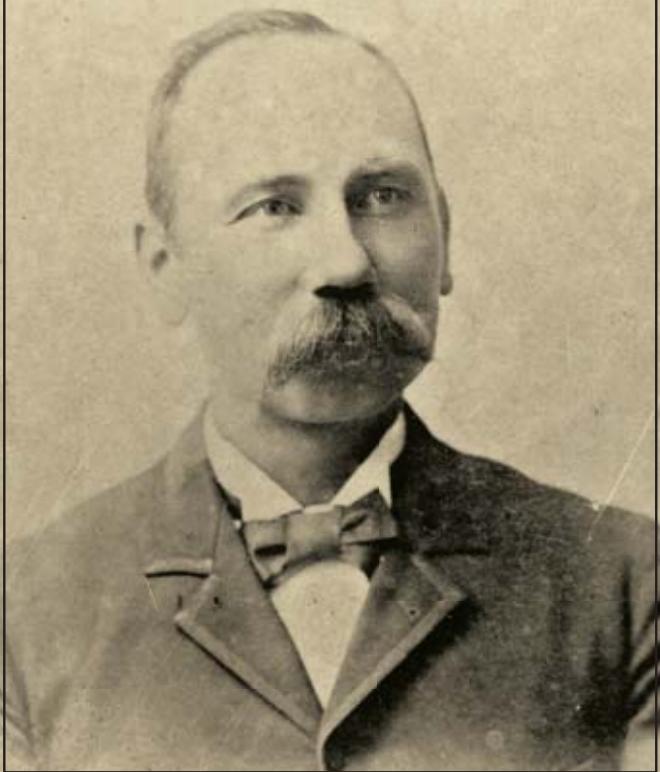
11 Debra Matthews Dean, ed., "David Henry Matthews Family" and "Polly Boss Matthews," typescripts, privately printed, n.d.

12 Dean, "Polly Boss Matthews."

13 Larson and Smith, *Life Story*.

Edward Christian **EYRING**

*a Family's Move from
Mexico to Arizona*



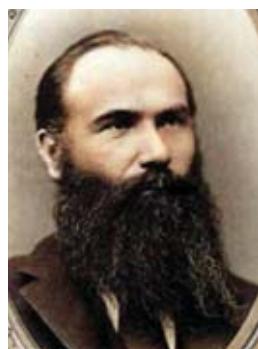
BY ELIZABETH SHAW SMITH

“**T** wouldn’t be caught dead in a turnip patch with that boy,” Edward Christian Eyring declared to his fifteen-year-old daughter, Camilla, when she asked for permission to go on a date with the young man in question.¹ Edward Eyring—respected citizen of Pima, Arizona; early colonist of Colonia Juárez in Mexico; breeder of fine horseflesh; persecuted victim of Mexican revolutionaries; and vigilant father—left as his most profound legacy the lives of his eighteen children. His uncowed determination in harsh times was a mute sermon on the importance of education, hard work, and morality. When he spoke, his children listened even when the message was unwelcome—as his words to his adolescent daughter Camilla may have been.

Edward Christian was born in 1868 in St. George, Utah, to western European immigrants Henry and Mary Bommeli Eyring. Henry attended the finest schools in Coburg, Germany, where his own father was a prosperous businessman and his mother an aristocrat whose father served King William III of Prussia. After his father’s business failed, Henry immigrated to the United States in 1853, where he met and was baptized by missionaries from the Church of Jesus Christ. While crossing the plains to Utah, Henry met Mary Bommeli and her family, Latter-day Saint immigrants from Switzerland. Mary and Henry married in 1860; just two years later they dutifully responded to a call to help settle southwestern Utah, where they lived for the next twenty-five years. Henry’s industry, faith, and intelligence endeared him to Saints there, and he served as mayor, bishop, and stake presidency counselor in St. George. In 1887 Henry and Mary accepted invitations from friends to move to Colonia Juárez, Mexico, where members of the Church had established settlements to escape persecution for practicing or supporting plural marriage.²

Edward’s childhood was typical of that of other small-town boys during the second half of the nineteenth century: he attended public schools in the winter and worked on the family farm and ranch in the summer. He was nineteen years old and was enrolled at Brigham Young Academy in Provo when his parents and siblings moved to Mexico in 1887. Edward left the Academy after two semesters, and that was the extent of his higher education. However, his schooling in frontier life was intense: Edward worked on the Colorado River ferry for his uncle Daniel Bommeli and as a cowboy on his uncle’s ranch in Arizona. Here he began his lifelong love affair with horses; he could rope, ride, and trade with the best.

By 1890, Edward’s father, Henry, was prospering as a merchant in Colonia Juárez and wanted Edward to join the family in Mexico. The colonists had begun various cooperative enterprises, including a tannery, a sawmill, a store, and a canning factory, and Colonia Juárez had entered into a prosperous and peaceful period, and Edward later wrote, “The twenty-five years of my life spent in Mexico were wonderful indeed.”³ Edward met and courted Caroline Cottam Romney, but it took him two years to win the consent of Caroline’s father, Miles Romney. Edward and Caroline were married in October 1893 in the Salt Lake Temple.



Henry Eyring



Mary Bommeli



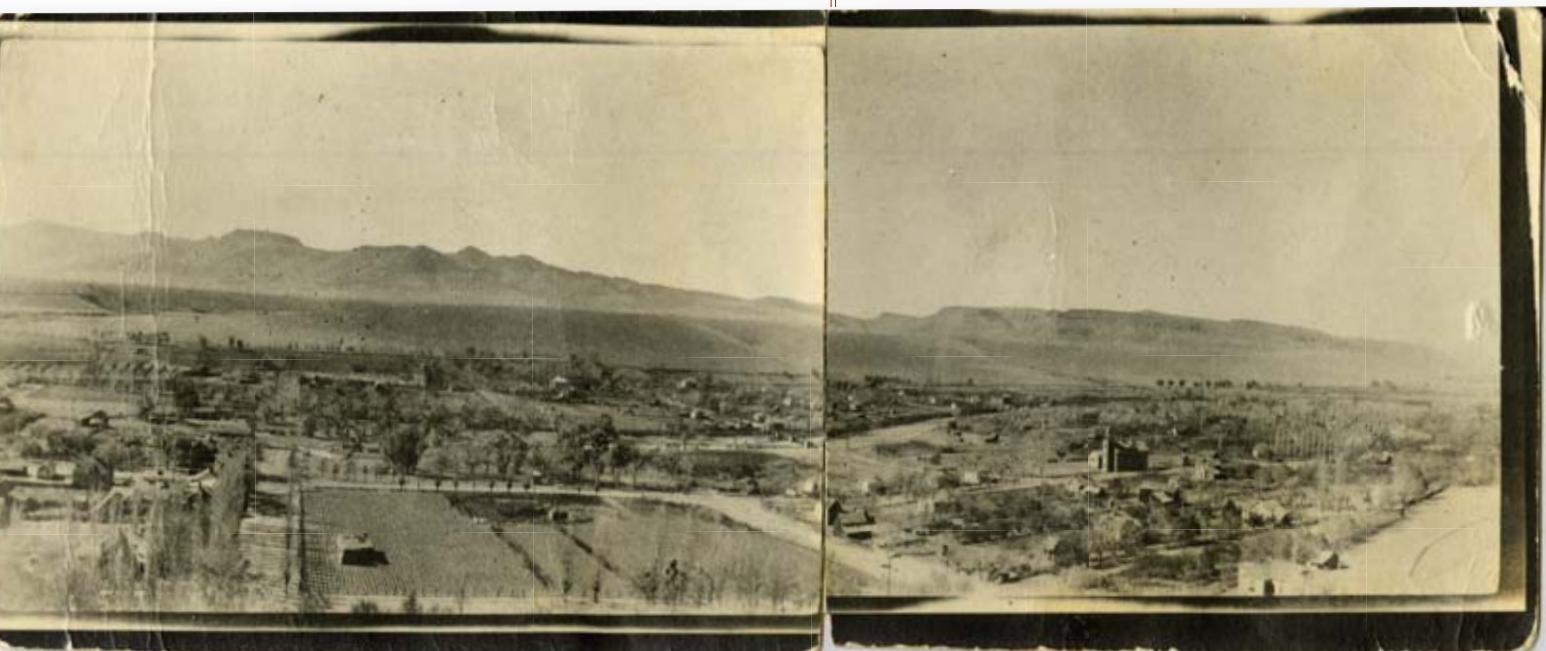
Edward had purchased a lot in Colonia Juárez, and a home began to go up following the marriage. The couple initially set up housekeeping “with only a straw tick and very little furniture,” while Edward helped his father in the store and traded in cattle and horses, some of which he hired out for work on the railroad grade. Four years later, when their firstborn Camilla was three and Caroline was pregnant with their second child, Mary, Edward left to serve a Church mission in Germany. When he left on his mission, he said, “I threw my tobacco away and have never tasted it since. If my mission did nothing more for me than that, that alone would be worth it.”⁴

Edward served a faithful, fruitful mission, supported by his wife who, he said, “was very brave, never making a complaint while I was away” despite the fact that, of necessity, “she worked very hard.” Edward’s joyful homecoming was marred by sad news. Little Mary, now two, had been born deaf. Caroline had kept this fact from him, not wanting to worry him on his mission. “I think I never felt so badly in all my life over anything,” remembered Edward.⁵ The mission had probably required more sacrifice by

Caroline than Edward, as the debtors Edward relied on to provide funds for the family never did pay what was owed, and Caroline scrimped and slept on the floor so she could give her bed to boarders. The strain led to a physical and mental breakdown, from which Caroline nearly died.

Deeming work in his father’s store “too slow,” Edward turned wholeheartedly to the cattle business. A good judge of both horses and men, he eventually owned thousands of acres of ranch and farmland in the colony and the family prospered. “I think the happiest time of my life was when we ran the dairy on the Tinaja,” Edward later wrote, “breaking broncos and caring for fat cattle on those green grassy hills. At that time the colonies were in their best days, everyone was prospering and there were good schools and good times for all.”⁶ Six more children were born to Edward and Caroline in Mexico.

In November 1903, Edward married Caroline’s younger sister, Emma, ten years’ Caroline’s junior. Although polygamy was illegal in the United States, it was not against the law in Mexico. A firm believer in strict equal-



Colonia Juárez



**Edward Christian and
Caroline Cottam Romney
Eyring on their wedding day**
Inset: Emma Romney, sister

ity for both wives and families, Edward built two comfortable brick homes, side by side, near the community's academy. Both families lived adjacent but generally separate and equal lives, in relative peace and contentment.⁷ Emma and Caroline each bore Edward nine children, fifteen living to adulthood.

The Eyrings' idyllic life started to disintegrate in 1910, when Francisco Madero began organizing revolutionaries to overthrow Mexico's president, Porfirio Diaz. At first Madero promised that Latter-day Saint

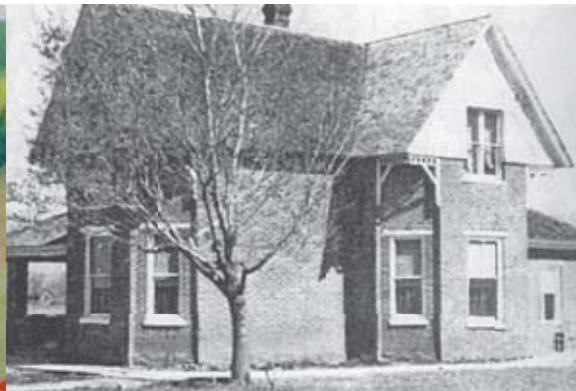


Evacuation of colonists from Mexico

colonists and other foreigners would not be molested, but the well-to-do colonists became an increasingly tempting target. By early 1912, the colonists were reporting incidents of plundering and terrorizing. On July 12, the revolutionaries stole all the flour from the grist mill at Colonia Diaz and then demanded the surrender of all arms and ammunition belonging to the colonists. The colonists, led by Junius Romney, refused to give up their arms. On July 26, however, General Salazar—commander of rebel forces in northern Mexico—rescinded all previous guarantees to foreigners of protection of life and property. Shortly thereafter, cannons, machine guns, and cavalry arrived at the settlements, and the colonists, seeing the futility of continued resistance, turned over their weapons. Men, women, and children were now at the mercy of the lawless rebels.⁸

In the face of this untenable situation, Church leaders in the Chihuahua colonies determined to send all women and children to El Paso, Texas, for safety. The exodus was to be temporary, as most believed the revolution would be short-lived. The colonists numbered about 4,000, and women and

Eyring Home in Colonial Juárez Mexico



children comprised at least three-fourths of this total. Accordingly, Edward sent Caroline and Emma and ten children by train to El Paso, with very little other than the clothes on their backs. There they remained for almost one year, relying on the kindness of the El Paso citizens and what little work they could find. Edward joined them there eventually, leaving behind everything he had worked for in Mexico. At that point, it was clear they could never return.

The Eyring and Romney families determined to start over in Arizona. After an unsuccessful venture in Safford, the Eyrings moved briefly to Thatcher before finally settling in Pima, trading their livery service for George Rogers' Pima farm. Here, Caroline's family lived in the existing two-room frame house, and Emma's family lived in tents until a similar two-room house could be built for her.

Life in Pima was hard for the Eyrings. The land was scrubby and had to be cleared; the ranch had a heavy mortgage. In addition to doing heavy farm and ranch work and raising their many children, Edward's two wives also contributed to family finances. Caroline worked as a nurse and midwife; Emma was named postmistress of Pima. Although the family struggled for several years, Edward and Caroline's emphasis on education never flagged. Many of the Eyring children

Sisters Caroline and Emma in Colonial Juárez



skipped at least one grade of public school, graduated high school early, and entered the University of Arizona in their mid-teens. This was highly unusual for any Arizonans of the era.

The Eyring home was located on a small hill and described by son Joseph as "an add-on." The original house sprouted two wings, one for each wife and her children, with a large living room connecting the two sides. Each wing had its own kitchen, and the two families ate separately. But both families met in the large middle room for family prayers, weekly family nights (where each child was expected to perform), and holiday celebrations.⁹ Edward adhered to a strict personal schedule to ensure he spent equal time with each family. As son Joseph reported,

[Father's "changing families"] was a Saturday night ritual. He would stay with one family one week and the other family the next week. He would get his suitcase packed up on Saturday night to go next door. ... [A]s a rule he had his meals wherever his suitcase was.¹⁰

Despite this anachronistic arrangement for twentieth-century Latter-day Saint families, children of both wives remember the relationship between the sister-wives and the children as respectful, warm, and "normal." Son LeRoy praised his father's ability to manage the potentially difficult situation:

I am sure it would take someone of my father's disposition to make such a plural marriage work in a day when it was unique in the community. It required a dignity and pride, which not only he but especially his wives possessed in abundance, to carry it off. It is incredible that he could have performed in as fair and equitable a way as he did the difficult task of fathering a large family from two ambitious and strong women. It was not easy and he obviously had trouble at times, almost beyond his ability to withstand, but I never knew him to do a mean or unfair thing. In retrospect, I do not think it humanly possible for a man to perform under such a difficult situation a more civilized job.¹¹

Until Edward's first wife Caroline died in 1954, Edward, Caroline, and Emma were possibly among the last active Latter-day Saints to practice polygamy. Edward retained the love and respect of both his wives and all his children throughout his life.

Edward's dignity, integrity, and duty to family, community, and church were unquestioned, and perhaps for this reason—and the achievements of his outstanding children—the family's polygamous arrangement was not publicized or disturbed, either by government or Church authorities. Other exiles from the Mexican colonies also continued polygamous arrangements for a time, and such families were not unknown in the Pima, Safford, and Thatcher communities.

Encouraged by their mothers even more than by their father, the children excelled in school and professions. Under the headline "Eyring Family of Pima Holds 23 College Degrees," a 1932

Arizona newspaper declared the number to be the most held by any family in Arizona and then listed the MD, JD, PhD, MA/MS, and BA/BS degrees held by Edward's children.¹² They earned additional degrees in the years following. Prominent among the children was Henry Eyring, award-winning theoretical chemist, who taught at Princeton and then served as dean of the graduate school at the University of Utah. Virtually all the daughters obtained college degrees, some doctorates. Daughter Caroline Eyring Miner was named Utah Poet of the Year in 1976. Rose Eyring Calder obtained a PhD in English at the University of California at Berkeley and was a professor at Brigham Young University. The list could go on.

Edward Eyring was a man of unusual ability and character who, because he lived the life of



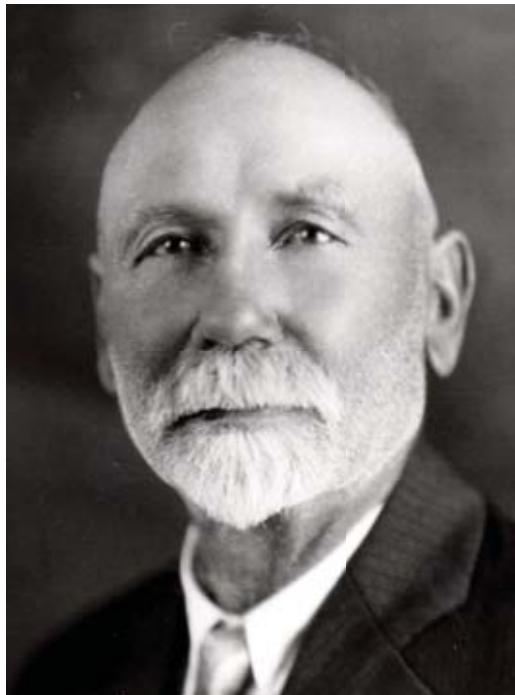
Edward, Caroline Eyring and children on 50th wedding anniversary



Edward, Emma Eyring and children on 50th wedding anniversary



frontier colonizer and pioneer, did not make the academic or social headlines that his children did. As neighbor Harold Bentley wrote, Edward was an expert horseman, not a “cowboy,” “an attractive gentleman with winning ways” and a Van Dyke beard who led and guided both horses and people with energy, courtesy, and warmth. His quiet but



profound influence helped shape not only Pima, Arizona, but all places his children and grandchildren have lived and served. □

The author thanks Dr Jan Eyring Thompson for graciously lending access to private family journals and other sources.

1 Caroline Eyring Miner, “Reminiscence of Camilla Eyring Kimball,” *The Life Story of Edward Christian Eyring* (1966), 84. Heeding her father’s advice, Camilla did not continue to date the young man; instead, she eventually married Spencer W. Kimball, of whom Edward approved.

2 Miner, 2–16.

3 Thomas Cottam Romney, *The Mormon Colonies in Mexico* (1938), 92–4; Edward Christian Eyring, “Life Story,” Pioneer, 65.1 (2018), reissued as “Edward Christian Eyring,” *SUPOnline* (2020), online.

4 Edward Christian Eyring, online.

5 *Ibid.*

6 *Ibid.*

7 Joseph C. Eyring [youngest son of Edward and Caroline], transcript of interview by Jessie Embry, 10 May 1976, Charles Redd Center for Western Studies, LDS Polygamy Oral History Project, BYU, Provo, 10–12.

8 Romney 150–81.

9 Joseph C. Eyring 2, 5; Joseph Clayborn Eyring, transcript of interview by Philip Max Eyring, privately printed (2009), 14–5.

10 Joseph C. Eyring 8–9; Miner 119–20.

11 Miner 119–20

12 Miner 57.

SPENCER WOOLLEY KIMBALL

Camilla Eyring

In 1898, Spencer Woolley Kimball's father Andrew was called as the president of the Gila Valley Stake, and the Kimball family traded their small brick home on the corner of 400 N and 300 W in Salt Lake City for a one-room adobe rental in very rural Thatcher, Arizona. Within a few years, they built a brick home on the southern boundary of Thatcher.

Shortly after the family's arrival in Thatcher, Andrew and his young sons wondered how they would ever clear their modest ten-acre farm and plant it. "The first thing we knew, the brethren from Central Ward had come those several miles with their picks and shovels, their axes, and they began to help us clear our ten acres. They came from Layton Ward, and then they came from Pima Ward. They came before we knew it, almost. With the help of my father, who was a very excellent worker, and two sons who were older than I was, we soon had the place ready to plant....

"Around the table, we talked of water; irrigation; crops; floods; hot, dry weeks; and cloudless skies. ... We learned to pray for rain—we always prayed for rain....

"Water was like liquid gold. ... Initially, we hauled drinking water from wells or springs. ... Later came a windmill to pump the water into a closed tank from a closed well. ... Then, glory be, a public water program piped water from a protected spring or deep well right into our home, and lifesaving trips to the mountain were rarer, burials farther separated, sick beds reduced, and pollution stopped....

"I rode with my father in the buggy to the far-flung wards [of the St. Joseph Stake] which extended out [hundreds of miles] from [the hub at] Globe and St. David, Arizona, to the border of Mexico at Douglas and Bisbee, and [to] Virden, New Mexico, and El Paso, Texas—two nations, three states, and seven counties....

"No one would ever have thought that someday I would be ... the President of the Church. When they saw me pitching hay as a little fellow with a small fork ... or when I was digging ditches or planting trees, or any other thing, no one would ever have dreamed that someday I would be in this position....

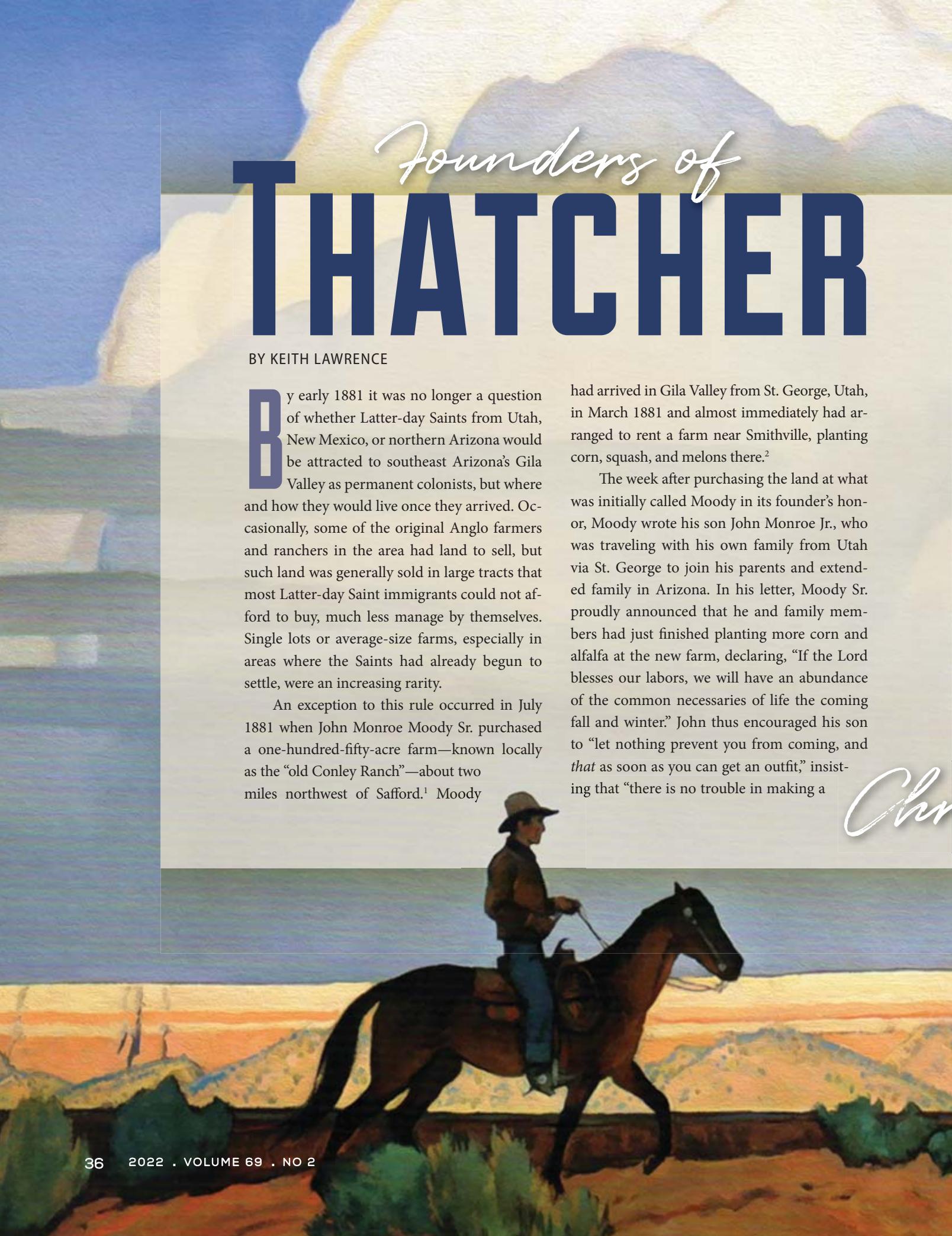


"I worked hard and I am very proud of it. It made me strong. Little did I know as a boy that daily chores in the garden, feeding the cattle, carrying the water, chopping the wood, mending fences, and all the labor of a small farm was an important part of sending down roots, before being called on to send out branches. I'm so grateful that my parents understood the relationship between roots and branches." □

Excerpts from Ronald W. Walker, "Mesquite and Sage: Spencer W. Kimball's Early Years," BYU Studies, 25.4 (Fall 1985): 1–23.

At the University of Arizona in August of 1917, Spencer began dating Camilla Eyring—a schoolteacher at Gila Academy. Kimball left for a semester at Brigham Young University, returned to Arizona, and by late October the couple had decided to marry.

They were married in a civil ceremony in Camilla's home in Pima, Arizona, on November 16, 1917. Seven months later, the couple made the two-day journey by train to Salt Lake City where they were sealed in the Salt Lake Temple on June 7, 1918 (see "Spencer W. Kimball," Wikipedia, online).



Founders of THATCHER

BY KEITH LAWRENCE

By early 1881 it was no longer a question of whether Latter-day Saints from Utah, New Mexico, or northern Arizona would be attracted to southeast Arizona's Gila Valley as permanent colonists, but where and how they would live once they arrived. Occasionally, some of the original Anglo farmers and ranchers in the area had land to sell, but such land was generally sold in large tracts that most Latter-day Saint immigrants could not afford to buy, much less manage by themselves. Single lots or average-size farms, especially in areas where the Saints had already begun to settle, were an increasing rarity.

An exception to this rule occurred in July 1881 when John Monroe Moody Sr. purchased a one-hundred-fifty-acre farm—known locally as the “old Conley Ranch”—about two miles northwest of Safford.¹ Moody

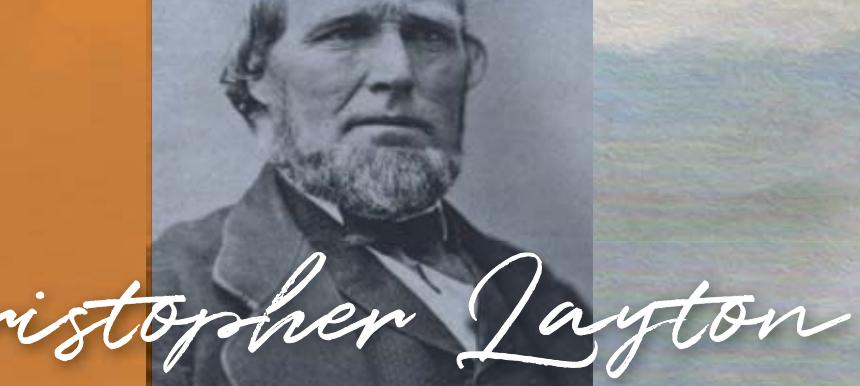
had arrived in Gila Valley from St. George, Utah, in March 1881 and almost immediately had arranged to rent a farm near Smithville, planting corn, squash, and melons there.²

The week after purchasing the land at what was initially called Moody in its founder's honor, Moody wrote his son John Monroe Jr., who was traveling with his own family from Utah via St. George to join his parents and extended family in Arizona. In his letter, Moody Sr. proudly announced that he and family members had just finished planting more corn and alfalfa at the new farm, declaring, “If the Lord blesses our labors, we will have an abundance of the common necessities of life the coming fall and winter.” John thus encouraged his son to “let nothing prevent you from coming, and that as soon as you can get an outfit,” insisting that “there is no trouble in making a

Chr

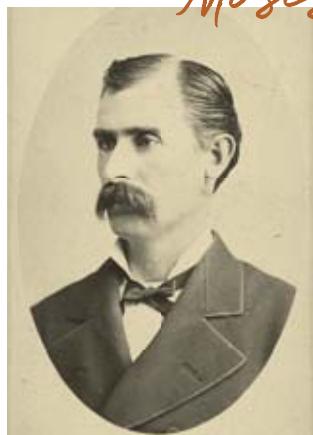


John M. Moody



Christopher Layton

Moses Thatcher



living in this country if a person will half work.”³

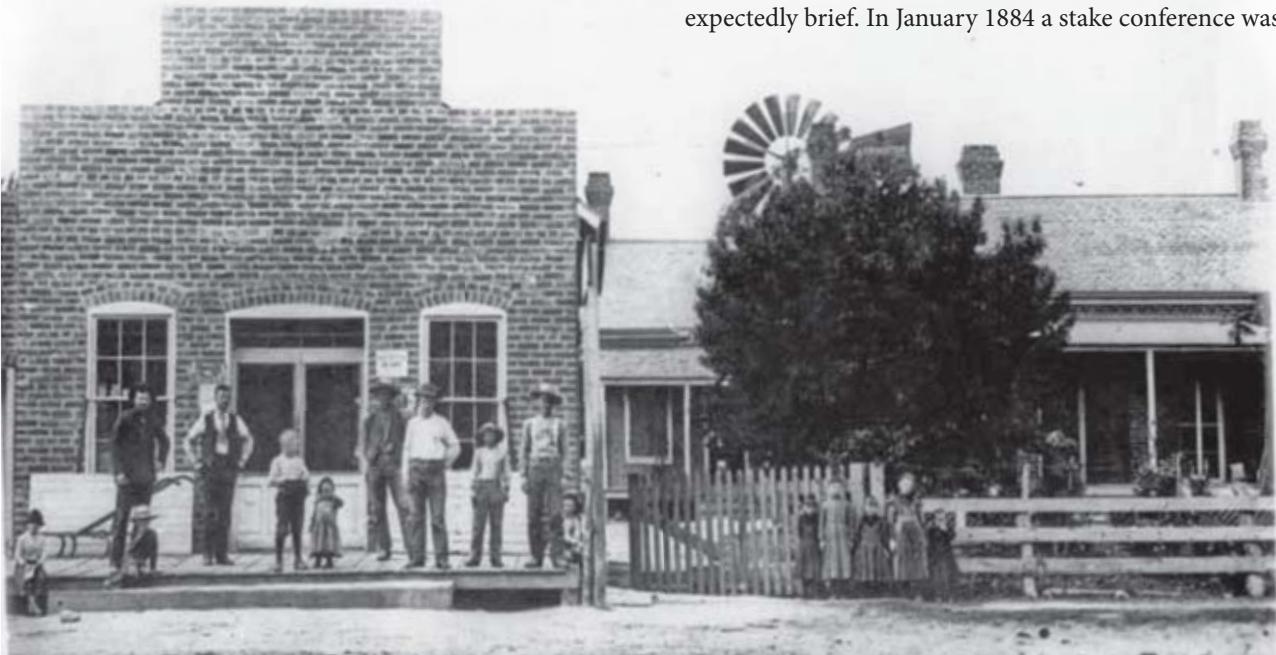
Soon, four other families had purchased farms near John Moody’s own, drawn in part by his enthusiasm and productivity. One of these was the family of James Pace, who had served as a lieutenant in the Mormon Battalion and who had dreamed of settling in the valley since first crossing through it with the Battalion.⁴ When Elders Moses Thatcher and Erastus Snow of the Quorum of the Twelve visited Gila Valley during December 1882, they were served Christmas dinner under a bowery adjoining John Moody’s home. Elder Thatcher took a special interest in the thriving farms of Moody and his neighbors, and the settlement was renamed Thatcher in his honor. The St. Joseph Stake was organized by President John Taylor in February 1883; in May, John Moody was called as bishop of the newly formed Thatcher Ward, comprised of members living in Thatcher and Central.⁵

John had served as a school board trustee, an alderman, and justice of the peace in St. George, Utah, but he was humbled by his calling as a bishop. He had learned early in life to face challenges with the personal motto, “The Lord will somehow open a way.” He loved the lines of a favorite hymn of his era: “Peace, troubled soul! thou need’st not fear. / Thy great Provider still is

near; / Who fed thee last will feed thee still, / Be calm, and seek to do his will.”⁶ Shortly after his arrival in St. George early in the 1860s, he had an experience that shaped his convictions about God’s protecting love. After John arranged the sale of a large herd of his cattle, the buyer insisted that John travel to White Pine, Nevada, to receive payment of one thousand dollars in gold.

After arriving in White Pine and receiving payment, John began the return trip back to St. George. As he set up camp the first night, he tried to start a fire, but match after match failed to light. John gave up, had a cold supper, and retired after dark. The following morning, he discovered tracks of three or four men who had apparently followed him and, knowing he carried a large sum in gold, intended to rob him. Their tracks circled and even crisscrossed the area of his campsite, but did not approach his immediate sleeping spot or where he had staked his horse. Had he been able to start a fire, he realized, he easily would have been found.⁷

He carried this faith in God’s care and influence into each of his callings, but especially his calling as bishop. He led with love and enthusiasm and was beloved of ward members. But his term as bishop was unexpectedly brief. In January 1884 a stake conference was



Christopher Layton’s home and store in Thatcher, Arizona, ca. 1900



"There is no trouble in making a living in this country if a person will half work."

held with several visiting Church leaders from Salt Lake, and John was determined to attend despite a lingering cold. The weather was harsh, though, and John developed pneumonia shortly after the conference ended. His condition worsened quickly, and he passed away two weeks later. His funeral was held in Pima, and Sunday School children lined both sides of the road leading to the meetinghouse as his coffin passed by. Samuel Claridge replaced him as bishop.⁸

When the St. Joseph Stake was organized in February 1883 Christopher Layton was sustained as stake president; his counselors were David P. Kimball and James H. Martineau. Layton was the founder of Kaysville and Layton, Utah, and was requested by Church leaders to help direct the fledgling church in southeast Arizona. Initially, the stake was headquartered at St. David, but Layton arranged for it to be moved to Thatcher because of its central location within Gila Valley. Layton did at least two crucial things as stake president that profoundly affected the settlement of Thatcher and the surrounding valley and nourished the growth of the Church there.⁹

First, Christopher Layton more or less singlehandedly enabled the rapid growth of Thatcher itself. After having become a successful farmer and businessman in Utah's Davis County, and after agreeing to move to Arizona in February 1883 to accept the calling as first president of the St. Joseph Stake, Layton was commissioned by Church leaders to do all in his power to build the Saints and the colonies of southeast Arizona. Layton used personal funds of \$21,000 (with an *inflated worth* of about \$600,000 today—but a comparative *income worth* of about \$4 million) to buy two thousand acres of land in Thatcher, to invest in a grist mill, to finance road construction, and, later, to buy significant acreage along the Union Canal, which was begun in 1886.¹⁰

Beginning in late 1884 Layton laid out a townsite on the land he had purchased in Thatcher and began building his own home there. He then resold the land in quarter-acre building lots and small farms to incoming Saints at prices just over what he had paid per acre. By January 1886, Thatcher had grown from just over forty residents to nearly two hundred. Layton encouraged other Saints to follow his example in buying land along the Union Canal and investing in canal stock. The Saints were encouraged to expand existing canals as needed, financing construction through stock shares. When the Union Canal was completed in 1890, Latter-day Saints owned most of the land around it; they owned significant acreage around other new or expanded canals as well. Indeed, between 1882 and 1894 the Saints constructed more than sixty miles of canals and brought more than 20,000 acres of new farmland into use. Latter-day Saints through-

out the valley became financially secure by following Layton's counsel to establish productive farms and businesses and to support one another in commerce and trade. Saints in Thatcher were also blessed as they aligned themselves with Layton's direction to make their community a commercial and cultural center. And although he and many other Saints were freighters who owned wagon or stage lines, Layton promoted the building of a railroad through Gila Valley, a railroad that would connect Globe with Bowie and other cities beyond. He championed the railroad's completion to Pima in 1895.¹¹

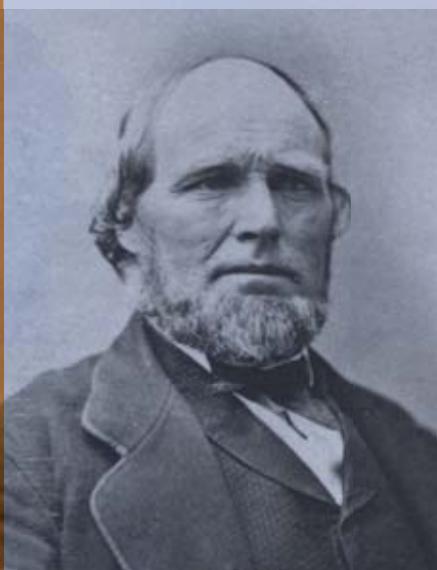
Second, in addition to helping secure the southeast Arizona Saints' temporal well-being, Layton nurtured their spiritual health by advocating unity, cooperation, and mutual support. This is a more dramatic accomplishment than it may initially appear, given distinctions between settler groups over a relatively short period of time. The majority of Saints arriving in Gila Valley before late 1882 were impoverished, common-sense people of the frontier who understandably lacked culture and polish but who knew how to farm, build simple and inexpensive but sturdy homes, care for animals, produce their own basic food supplies, and dig in and survive.

They arrived in the valley by team and wagon after long, arduous journeys. They were people of plain but profound faith; they also tended to be stoic, stubborn, and fiercely independent. In contrast, most Gila Valley Saints arriving after early 1883 came at least part of the way by train. They tended to have more money, to be better established socially and politically, to have urban cultural foundations. They were better educated and had legal, business, engineering, and other professional skills that earlier settlers lacked. They were also more accepting of diverse perspectives, more willing to befriend and work closely with non-Latter-day Saints. But they were often naïve about genuine frontier life and were less well prepared than earlier Saints to make do, improvise, and endure. Because of their backgrounds, education, and social experience, however, they tended to be confident and assertive—to voice their opinions and take charge even though they were "new."¹²

Layton clearly belonged to the latter group, but seemed aware that his own differences sometimes prevented him from fitting in. He sought to bridge rather than emphasize distinctions. He recognized inherent strengths of the early settlers and



Construction of the Arizona Canal, part of the Salt River Project in Maricopa County



*Between 1882
and 1894
the Saints
constructed
more than
sixty miles of
canals and
brought more
than 20,000
acres of new
farmland
into use.*



*Layton and
Allred Store,
ca. 1900*

involved them in ward and stake leadership. When early settlers—whether individuals or communities—were somewhat slow to accept or follow his counsel, he didn't take it personally, but responded through meek and loving interactions and service. Because first residents of Smithville, for example, resented that Layton, an “outsider,” had been chosen to preside over *their* stake, they accordingly refused to move their settlement to higher ground as he had directed. But Layton didn't force the point. Instead, he quietly waited for Smithville residents to recognize for themselves that ongoing conflicts between their land claims and the old Texas Railroad Grant, together with community outbreaks of malaria and other illnesses, were tied to their insistently preserving their town's original location.¹³

Layton encouraged the valley's Saints to responsibly develop their respective townsites and to live close to one another rather than occupying far-flung lots in a townsite's corners. As the originator of Thatcher's city plan and owner of its unsold properties, Layton could orchestrate its development, selling lots from the center outward. For Layton, physical communalism was the foundation of spiritual unity. Efficient and meaningful Church operation relied on an underlying structure of Christian neighborliness. Stake leaders, including council and board members, met monthly with relevant ward and branch leaders in “union meetings”—an early version of today's leadership meetings—to be instructed and to study together. All stake business was conducted in Thatcher, including stake conferences, leadership meetings, and other study, training, and planning. Stake and ward priesthood and auxiliary leaders carefully attended to the well-being and needs of individual members. Under Layton, the stake presidency had a single primary objective: that all Gila Valley Saints be welded together as a functioning, close-knit Church colony.¹⁴

By the early 1890s Thatcher had become a benchmark of development throughout the Latter-day Saint colonies of Gila Valley. “The town of Thatcher was growing in population,” Layton proudly wrote, “land was



being cleared, shade trees planted, and grain being put in; also many fields were sowed in alfalfa." And Gila Valley itself, he beamed, "was now dotted over with homes of the settlers, and we had quite large assemblages at our quarterly conferences. Our schools were being well attended; each ward had one or more schoolhouses. The Lord's blessing rested upon us and we prospered; our hearts were united in the cause of Truth."¹⁵

Layton joined with fellow Thatcher resident Reuben Allred to create the Layton-Allred Commercial Company—a body that would encourage Latter-day Saint commercial growth in Thatcher and elsewhere in Gila Valley. In 1895 Layton himself established a creamery and ice plant in Thatcher; he celebrated the opening of Thatcher's Big Six store—also owned by Latter-day Saints—which became a primary commercial site for residents of the northern valley.¹⁶

At the turn of the century, the most important Gila Valley school, at least for Latter-day Saint residents, was the St. Joseph Stake Academy, originating in an August 1888 letter from the First Presidency of the Church instructing Layton and his counselors to begin making serious plans for a stake school. After Layton and his counselors took active roles in planning and rallying support for the school, the St. Joseph Stake Academy opened in the Central Ward meetinghouse in the fall of 1890 with fewer than two dozen students. Most were in the early primary grades; a few were in junior high. After two months in the rather cramped Central meetinghouse, and after enrollment had increased to forty-five,

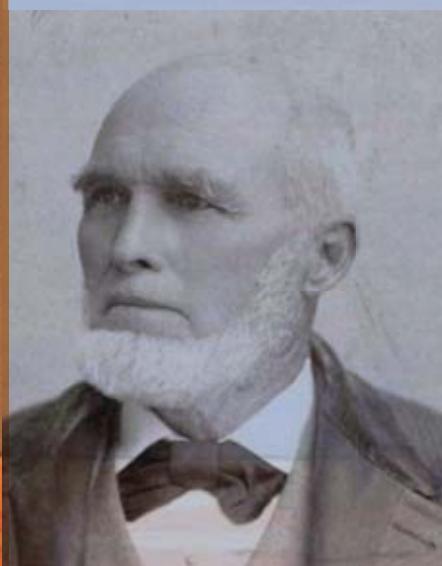
the academy was moved to Thatcher, which has been its home ever since. An independent academy building in Thatcher was completed in time for fall 1892 classes.¹⁷

When Christopher Layton was released as stake president in January 1898 for health reasons, Thatcher's population had increased to nearly nine hundred, and the town honored him for his leadership and accomplishments. Layton was replaced by thirty-nine-year-old Andrew Kimball, who had previously served as president of the Indian Territory Mission. Obeying the counsel given him by the First Presidency in his letter of release, Layton spent careful hours with Kimball discussing the character and needs of the stake and its members. In accepting the call to serve as president of the St. Joseph Stake, Kimball had known he was leaving his Salt Lake City home permanently and that he and his family would become southeast Arizonans—and engaged, committed residents of Thatcher. While serving as stake president, Kimball was appointed as territorial representative to the National Irrigation Congress in Washington, DC; he also served on a variety of local canal boards and fulfilled many other civic roles.¹⁸

Andrew and Olive Woolley Kimball's son Spencer Woolley—not yet three years old when the family moved to Arizona—would become Thatcher's most famous citizen. He accepted the call to become a member of the Quorum of the Twelve in 1943; thirty years later, in 1973, he was sustained as the twelfth president of the Church of Jesus Christ.

By January 1898, Thatcher's population had increased to nearly nine hundred, and the town honored

Christopher Layton for his leadership and accomplishments.



In line with Christopher Layton's vision of more than one hundred forty years ago, contemporary Thatcher continues to tout its economic potential and purpose: "Located in the heart of the Gila River Valley," a site linked to Thatcher's official home page asserts, "Thatcher is the geographic center of a growing and vibrant economic region [and] boasts some of the best business sites in southeast Arizona."¹⁹ As a growing city offering everything from big game hunting and outdoor activities of every kind to music, art, and "cowboy poetry," Thatcher is seen by its advocates as a highly traditional yet environmentally sensitive and forward-looking place. In this seemingly contradictory self-characterization, Thatcher continues to advocate and embody its enduring pioneer roots of acceptance, unity, independence, and personal integrity. □

1 Williams 15; Brent S. Child, "John M. Moody Biography," *John M. Moody (1822–1884)*, *BillionGraves.com*, online. Tradition has it that the purchase was concluded and the deed to the farm signed on 4 Jul 1881.

2 John M. Moody Sr. to John M. Moody Jr., Graham County, Arizona, 12 Jul 1881, transcript, *John M. Moody Sr., Memories*, *FamilySearch.org*, online.

3 Ibid.

4 Pace was a founder of Payson, Utah; he helped colonize the towns of New Harmony and Washington in southwestern Utah.

5 It appears that, beginning sometime in late 1881 or early 1882, Moody had accepted the calling to serve as the presiding elder of Central Branch, also comprised of Saints living in Central and Thatcher; the branch would have been

dissolved with the creation of Thatcher Ward. Certain Moody family histories incorrectly state that John Moody was made the first bishop of Central Ward (rather than presiding elder of Central Branch) in 1882; this is not possible, given that Central Ward was not organized until the fall of 1883, and records show that Joseph Cluff was called as its first bishop. See Andrew Jensen, *Encyclopedic History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (1941), 130–1, 871; Jetrina Smith, "Life Sketch of John Monroe Moody," *John Monroe Moody Sr., Memories*, *FamilySearch.com*, online; Williams 15, 32, 34–5.

6 The lines are from "He Careth for You," text by Samuel Ecking, hymn #25, George Q. Cannon, ed., *Sacred Hymns and Spiritual Songs for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (1871); the lines first brought comfort and confirmation as Moody second-guessed his decision to accept his call to the "Dixie" mission. See Jetrina Smith, "John Monroe Moody Biography," *John M. Moody (1822–1884)*, *BillionGraves.com*, online.

7 Smith, "Moody Biography," online.

8 Ibid.; Jensen 871.

9 Jensen 733–4; Williams 32–3.

10 Williams 31–2; *Pvt. Christopher Layton, Memorials*, *FindAGrave.com*, online; *MeasuringWorth.com*, online.

11 Williams 34, 35, 49, 52, 53; Christopher Layton, *Autobiography of Christopher Layton*, ed. John Q. Cannon (1911), 217.

12 Williams 39.

13 Williams 34, 39, 42.

14 Williams 42–3.

15 Layton 214, 217.

16 Williams 53; Layton 217–8.

17 Williams 59. A separate article in this issue provides a full history of the academy.

18 Williams 54, 60–1; Layton 222–4.

19 *ThatcherNow.com*, Home, online.



George and Alice Richards' Tooele home, ca. 1890s



Elder George F. Richards's

TRAVELS TO SOUTHEASTERN ARIZONA, 1907–1908

“The Most Remote Stakes in the Church”

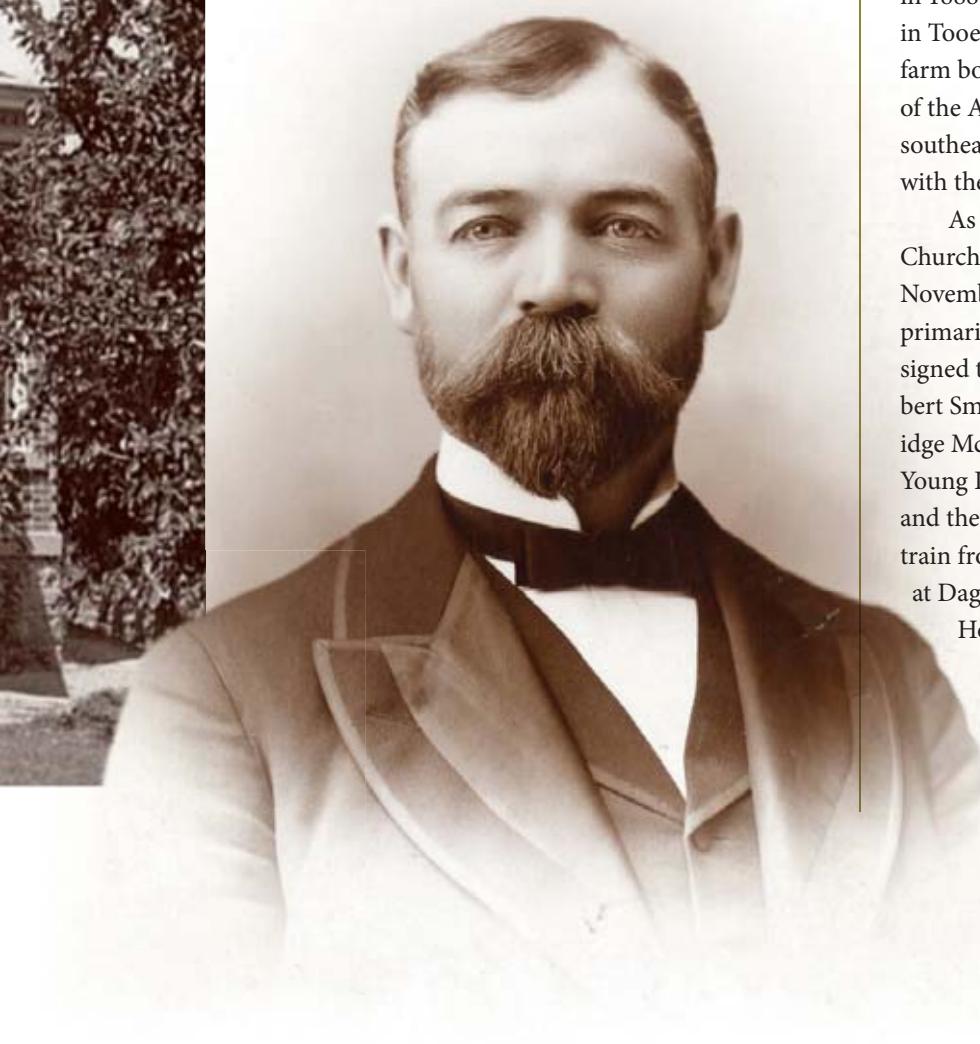
BY MATTHEW C. GODFREY

In November 1907, Elder George F. Richards boarded a train in Salt Lake City, Utah, to make what would be the first of five official trips to eastern Arizona during the next six years. As a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, Richards took very seriously his assignments to visit, counsel, and strengthen the Latter-day Saints of north- and

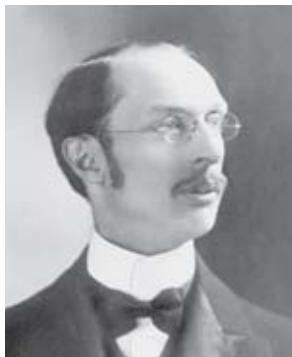
southeastern Arizona. Richards was a careful journal keeper, and his back-to-back trips to Arizona in late 1907 and early 1908 provide especially detailed impressions of the early twentieth-century Arizona Saints and their efforts to build the Church.

George F. Richards was born and raised in Farmington, Utah; following his marriage in 1888 he established a farm and business in Tooele, Utah.¹ His background as a rural farm boy enabled him to relate well to many of the Arizona Saints, particularly those in the southeast region of the state, and to identify with their triumphs as well as their challenges.

As was true of Richards' other official Church travels, his trip to Arizona in late November and early December 1907 was made primarily via train and stagecoach. He was assigned to accompany fellow Apostle George Albert Smith; they were joined by Elizabeth Claridge McCune, who served on the boards of the Young Ladies Mutual Improvement Association and the Genealogical Society. The three took a train from Salt Lake City to Daggett, California; at Daggett, they took a second train east to Holbrook, Arizona. After spending most of two weeks visiting each of the primary northeastern settlements—Snowflake, Pinedale, Show Low, Concho, and St.



George Albert Smith



Elizabeth Claridge McCune



Andrew Kimball



Johns—they spent another week in Mesa. The party then traveled to southeastern Arizona, arriving first in Thatcher.²

The community of Thatcher had been settled in 1881 and had celebrated its twenty-sixth anniversary a few months before Elder Richards' visit. Named in honor of Moses Thatcher, who was called to the Quorum of the Twelve in 1879, the small community became host to the Latter-day Saint Academy (formerly the St. Joseph Academy) in 1892. The Academy soon emerged as a prominent academic and social center for Church members in the American Southwest.³

When Richards, Smith, and McCune arrived in Thatcher on the evening of November 26, McCune was welcomed by her father and other relatives; Smith and Richards were hosted by the family of Andrew Kimball, who had become president of the St. Joseph Stake in 1898. They had Thanksgiving dinner with the Kimball family the following day. Although Richards doesn't mention in his journal meeting Andrew's twelve-year-old son, Spencer W., he and Smith undoubtedly did—and thirty-six years later, in 1943, Spencer would join them in the Quorum of the Twelve.⁴

Richards' journal shows respectful silence toward recent

tragedies in Andrew Kimball's home. Just one year earlier, in October 1906, Kimball's wife Olive had passed away from a serious infection, leaving behind eight children, five of whom were thirteen years of age or younger. And in June 1907 the youngest child, Rachel, had died of diphtheria.⁵

However, Richards and Smith spent several hours on Thanksgiving Day counseling and encouraging Andrew and the other two members of the St. Joseph Stake presidency. Smith and Richards then went to the home of William D. Johnson, a former counselor in the stake presidency who had earlier been released because of advanced age and deteriorating health, and gave him a heartfelt priesthood blessing.⁶

Over the next several days, Smith and Richards held several meetings with members of the St. Joseph Stake. The day after Thanksgiving, they addressed a stake gathering of the Young Men's and Young Women's Mutual Improvement Associations and held a fireside in Layton, a small community about three miles from Thatcher.⁷ On the morning of November 30 Richards met with the local Religion Class Board, a body formed in stakes throughout the Church to "arrange for and supervise religious instruction in the elementary schools" following the passage of the anti-polygamy Edmunds-Tucker Act in 1887.⁸ That afternoon, Richards addressed a stake conference session attended by 730 people.



Andrew Kimball family (future prophet Spencer W. Kimball on Andrew's lap)

He spoke for fifty minutes with “good liberty” about various topics, including temporal ones: “Spoke of the climate Soil & resources,” he recorded in his journal, and “advised that they make their homes attractive within & without.”⁹

The following morning, Sunday, December 1, the concluding session of stake conference was held, and Richards spoke for twenty-five minutes on the importance of temple work. Following the session, Smith and Rogers spent two hours setting apart individuals called to new stake positions and ordaining men to priesthood offices. John Frederick Nash had just been called as the second counselor in the St. Joseph Stake Presidency, and bishoprics in two wards within the stake were reorganized.¹⁰

On December 2, Smith and Richards attended classes and held a devotional at the St. Joseph Academy, and Richards spoke about the purpose of stake academies in the Church. The two then traveled to Central, a community between Thatcher and Pima, where they met with five individuals “who could not indorse the doctrines that the Father and the Son are two separate personages.” Richards stated in his journal that he and Smith “left them our testimony & warned them to repent as the Spirit will not always strive with man.” That evening, after returning to Thatcher, the two joined a meeting of the

St. Joseph Stake where they provided additional instruction, testimony, and encouragement. Following a busy and doubtless exhausting week, Smith and Richards boarded a train on December 3 for El Paso, Texas, the next stop on their trip. While on the train, Richards wrote a “report of our labors in St. Joseph Stake to the First Presidency.”¹¹

Not quite three months later, in late February 1908, Richards traveled again to southeastern Arizona, this time with Elder John Henry Smith, who had been a member of the Quorum of the Twelve for nearly thirty years. Before making their official visits to the southeastern Saints, Smith and Richards spent most of February 25 at the Theodore Roosevelt Dam, under construction just below the confluence of Tonto Creek and the Salt River northeast of Phoenix. Although the dam would not be



completed until 1911, Richards was impressed by its announced size, recording that it was “about 250 ft wide at bottom” and that it “will be about 800 ft wide at top.” He continued, “The dam is built of Stone masonry laid up in cement and is to be 290 feet high from river bed, 16 feet wide on top ... so as to [enable] cross[ings] of the dam with teams.”¹²

The first official visit of John H. Smith and Richards was on February 26 to the small mining community of Globe, located about seventy-five miles northwest of



St. Joseph Stake, Thatcher, Arizona



Globe, Arizona, ca 1899

Thatcher. The Globe Branch of the Church of Jesus Christ had been organized just two years earlier, yet the congregation already had its own building in the southern part of the town. Richards and Smith held an evening meeting at the building, which Richards described as “a neat church, nicely seated, a good organ,” stating that the chapel could hold about one hundred fifty people. He estimated that about half of those attending the meeting were not members of the Church, and that only about sixty-five Church members lived in Globe. This number was down from about one hundred sixty members when the branch was organized, he noted, because “of the General business depression”—the Panic of 1907—that led to a protracted downturn in the nation’s economy and drove people from Globe’s mines in search of other work in other places.¹³

From Globe, Smith and Richards took a train to Thatcher and stayed there for six days, this time with Charles M. Layton, a

counselor in the stake presidency. During their stay, Richards was invited to speak at a devotional held at the St. Joseph Academy. Inspired by a student choir that opened the meeting with Arizona’s territorial song (probably “Arizona, Sunkissed Land”), Richards encouraged “patriotism to country, to state, city, religion and school, home &c.” He also explained how a sound education developed students socially, intellectually, industrially, and spiritually. Smith and Richards also met individually with many stake members, administering to sick children and adults, setting apart recently called counselors in bishoprics, and giving counsel and comfort. During their last evening in Thatcher on March 3, Smith and Richards spoke at a youth devotional where Richards talked about “reading, virtue, and dancing.” Several people told him after the meeting that his talk was “much needed, especially that part referring to position in the dance.”¹⁴

Richards made three more trips to southeastern Arizona during the next four years: one in late February and early March 1910, one in March 1911, and one in March 1912. He visited stake leaders and members in Thatcher on each of these trips, as well as other southern Arizona communities including Benson, Tucson, St. David, and Bowie. During the St. Joseph Stake Conference in Thatcher in early March 1910, Richards suggested the need for a place where children could be appropriately instructed during the Sunday morning session of conference. He recommended that the stake convene a concurrent children’s Sunday School at St. Joseph Academy. “The Academy is owned by the Church & Saints,” he declared, and surely could be used for that purpose. Three days later, while visiting Saints in Benson on March 9, he sent a note to President Andrew Kimball in Thatcher recommending that “a Branch be organized at Benson and that they be instructed to hold Sacramental meetings and Sunday School.”

Hyrum M. Smith



Exactly one year later, on March 9, 1911, Richards was assigned to return to southeastern Arizona with fellow Apostle Hyrum M. Smith to establish a branch in Benson, calling it the Robinson Branch after Joseph E. Robinson, who was then presiding over the California Mission. "I little thought I would participate in this organization one year from that day," Richards noted in his journal.¹⁵

Richards' journal entries about his travels among the Arizona Saints give an intriguing glimpse into the early twentieth-century Church in the region. Although most Latter-day Saint communities in Arizona were barely thirty years old and were still in developmental stages, they were home to strong, devoted Church

members already mature in Church culture and doctrinal understanding. Visits from general Church leaders strengthened and encouraged the Saints; the counsel provided by Richards and others was invaluable. The trips to eastern Arizona were also important to Richards. He had not traveled much outside of Utah prior to his call to the Quorum of the Twelve, but his trips to Arizona gave him empathy and understanding for members in "the most remote stakes in the Church."¹⁶ □

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1 George F. Richards was born in 1861 to Franklin D. Richards and Nanny Longstroth; he was the nephew of Willard Richards ("About George F. Richards and His Journal," *ChurchHistoriansPress.org*, online).

2 George F. Richards, journal, 6 – 26 Nov 1907, Church History Library, Salt Lake City (hereafter "Richards journal"); Preston Nibley, "Elizabeth Claridge McCune, One Of the Great Women of the Church," *Church News*, 13 Mar 1954.

Laroy Devar Saline, "Historical Survey of the St. Joseph Stake Academy, Pioneer-ing Antecedent of Gila Junior College of Graham County," MA thesis, Arizona State College, 1947, 29-30, 69-70, 94, 133, 137; Wayne Stout, *A History of Thatcher, Arizona*, privately printed (1975), 7-9, 17.

4 Richards journal, 26 – 28 Nov 1907; Stout 19-20; Edward L. Kimball and Andrew E. Kimball, Jr., *Spencer W. Kimball* (1977), 18-9, 188-95.

5 Kimball and Kimball, *Spencer W. Kimball*, 45-54.

6 Richards journal, 28 Nov 1907; Stout 20.

7 Richards journal, 29 Nov 1907; Layton would be annexed by the city of Safford in 1944.

8 Richards journal, 30 Nov 1907; the quotation is from Leonard J. Arrington, "The Founding of the LDS Institutes of Religion," *Dialogue*, 2 (Summer 1967): 138-9. For several years, religion classes for elementary school students were held after school in wards throughout the Church; gradually, the Primary organization assumed this responsibility.

9 Richards journal, 30 Nov 1907.

10 Richards journal, 1 Dec 1907.

11 Richards journal, 2 and 3 Dec 1907.

12 Richards journal, 25 Feb 1908. Richards also stated that the projected cost of the dam was more than \$12 million (equivalent to more than \$400 million today) and that the dam would create a lake more than twelve and a half miles long.

13 Richards journal, 26 Feb 1908; *Globe Arizona Stake History*, privately printed, Globe, AZ (1996), 40; Jon R. Moen and Ellis W. Tallman, "The Panic of 1907," *Federal Reserve History*, online.

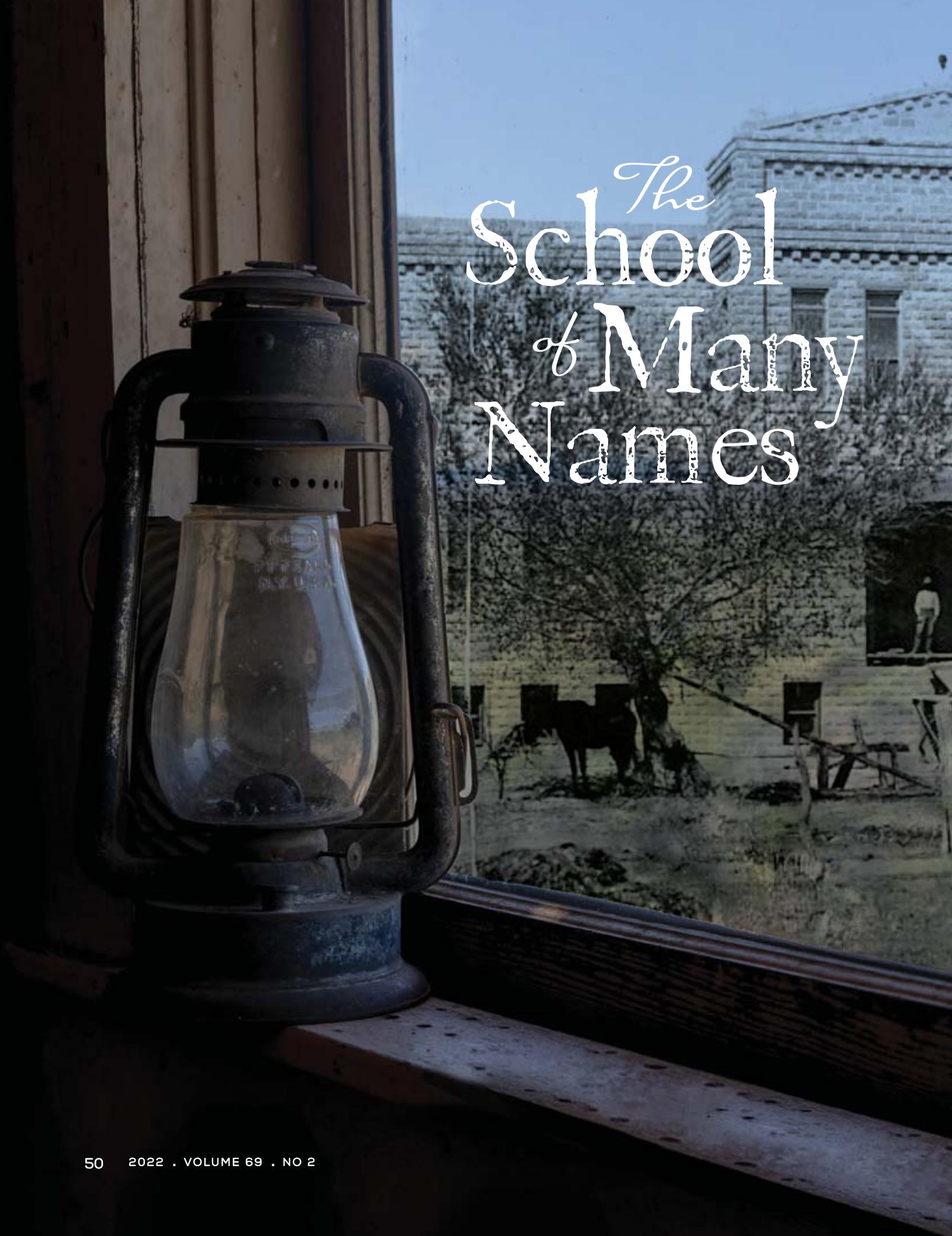
14 Richards journal, 27 Feb – 3 Mar 1908; "Arizona: The Story of Arizona's State Anthems," *State Library of Arizona, Wordpress.com*, online.

15 Richards journal, 6 and 9 Mar 1910, 9 Mar 1911.

16 George F. Richards, address, 7 Apr 1911, *Eighty-first Annual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (1911), 42.



Benson, Arizona; Albert Warner Jr. Collection, online



The School of Many Names



St. Joseph Stake Academy to Eastern Arizona College

BY WAYNE K. HINTON

In June 1831, William W. Phelps was instructed to select and write books “for schools in this church, that the children also may receive instruction before me as is pleasing unto me.”¹ When Latter-day Saints established settlements on the western frontier, schools were initially convened in such primitive structures as lean-tos and tents. As a settlement grew, pioneers erected a shared public building used for church meetings, school, and other community gatherings. In maturing communities, separate church buildings and schoolhouses were constructed.² Significantly, education was a priority in every Latter-day Saint community—and this was so from the first days of the Restoration.

The first Latter-day Saint school in Gila Valley opened in a tent in Smithville in 1879. By December of that year residents had built a twenty-by-fifteen-foot schoolhouse of cottonwood logs. Modest tuition was charged, and soon this sole valley school became part of the Arizona territorial school system.³

By the 1880s US public schools were increasingly secular, and states were reducing or eliminating public religious instruction. Non-Latter-day Saint denominations, seeking to draw Latter-day Saint youth away from their religion, began establishing academy schools in “Mormon” communities throughout the West. Such schools boasted charismatic teachers who generally provided instruction superior to that offered by public schools.⁴

St. Joseph Stake Academy

Latter-Day Saint Academy

*Joy Wells Dunyon,
principal, 1890*

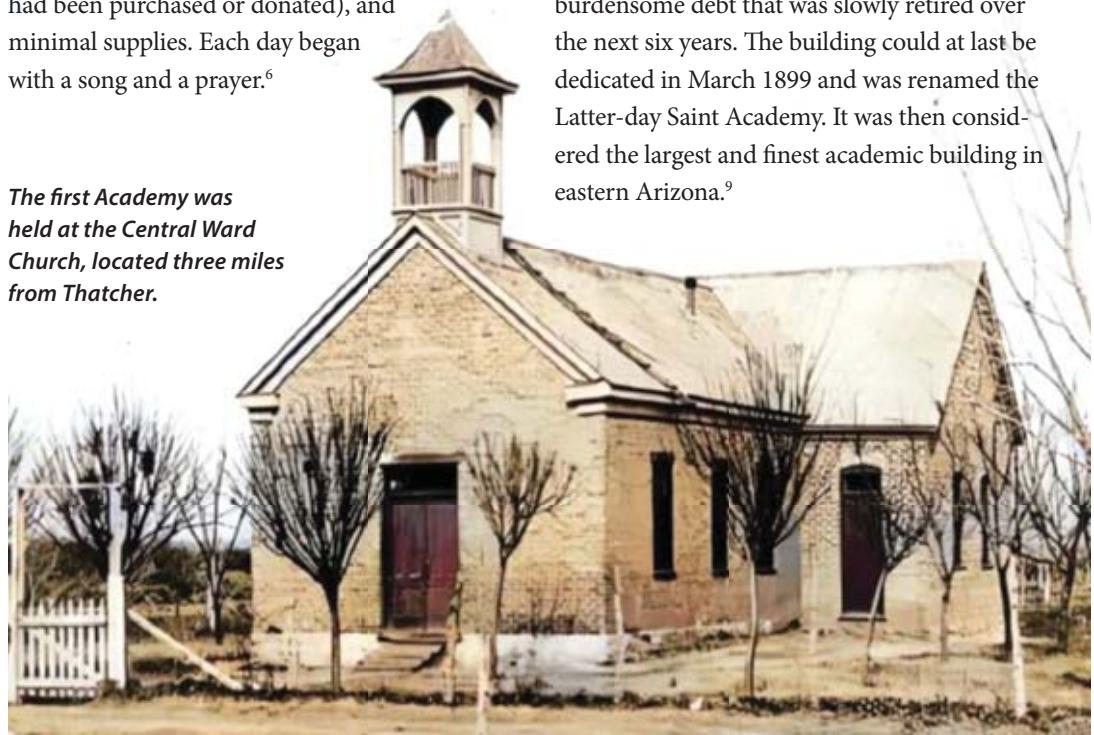


To counter such schools and to ensure that Latter-day Saint youth received appropriate moral and religious as well as secular instruction, the Church General Board of Education—under the guidance of the First Presidency—began in the 1880s the process

of establishing a Church academy in each of about three dozen selected stakes throughout the West. In August 1888 Christopher Layton received a First Presidency letter directing him and his counselors to organize a stake board of education and begin preparations for a stake academy in Gila Valley.⁵

During the next two years, a curriculum was established, an academy principal—Joy Wells Dunyon, a recent graduate of Brigham Young Academy in Provo, Utah—was selected, and books and supplies were ordered as the stake budget allowed. The St. Joseph Stake Academy opened at Central, Arizona, in December 1890 with seventeen students and one teacher for all grades, primary through intermediate. The students met in a single room with benches (no desks), a few books (the Academy had no library and only ten books had been purchased or donated), and minimal supplies. Each day began with a song and a prayer.⁶

The first Academy was held at the Central Ward Church, located three miles from Thatcher.



The Church had intended its academies to be secondary schools. But when the St. Joseph Stake Academy closed for winter break, it still had no students at the high school level. It had recruited additional students during its first eight weeks, however, more than doubling its initial enrollment.⁷

When the academic year resumed in February 1891, enrollment had climbed above sixty. The school was moved to the old adobe meetinghouse in Thatcher, a more convenient location for students from the central and southern valley and for students from Thatcher itself, given that thirty-eight of the sixty-four students were now attending school in their hometown. Ten weeks later, the school was moved to the Thatcher red brick tithing office; this was the Academy's home for the next sixteen years.⁸

Is In the fall of 1891 George Cluff—another graduate of Brigham Young Academy—became the second principal of the stake school, replacing Dunyon who had resigned to pursue an advanced degree. Under Cluff's able leadership, the school continued to grow. A second story was added to the tithing office during the summer of 1893 to create additional classroom space, and the stake incurred a burdensome debt that was slowly retired over the next six years. The building could at last be dedicated in March 1899 and was renamed the Latter-day Saint Academy. It was then considered the largest and finest academic building in eastern Arizona.⁹



During the summer of 1893, a second story was added to the St. Joseph Stake tithe building located in Thatcher. In March, 1899, the building was dedicated and the name changed from St. Joseph Stake Academy to the Latter-day Saints Academy.



The 1893–94 academic year saw a record enrollment of 109 students, all of them now in secondary grades. Beginning in September 1893 all primary students in the valley attended district elementary schools. However, the future of the academy remained somewhat tenuous. The national depression of 1893 only compounded the debt burden carried by the school. Many parents found it difficult to pay their children's tuition, especially if the family was large. Teachers received \$35 a month—about one-fourth less than the \$44 monthly salary of US blue-collar workers at the time—and were given half in cash and half in produce. Frustration and discouragement increased. Teachers were not prom-

ised a salary as the 1895–96 academic year began. They agreed to work, nevertheless, because of their love for the gospel and their students.¹⁰

In late 1895 a diphtheria epidemic hit Gila Valley, and diphtheria often turned into croup, especially in young children. Quarantine proved to be the only way to contain sickness and death. School attendance dropped at St. Joseph Academy as well as across public schools in the county, and many tuition payments were in arrears. After the Christmas break, school resumed, but by early February 1896 the combination of an ongoing financial depression and the epidemic-caused public health crisis led administrators to close the academy.¹¹

The academy would not reopen again until the fall of 1898. During the two and one-half years it was closed to classes, the building was well maintained and was utilized for various educational, social, and church events.¹² Stake president Christopher Layton himself became seriously ill and could not appropriately advocate for the academy's reopening. As his condition worsened, he was released as stake president in January 1898. His successor, Andrew Kimball, was young, vigorous, and dynamic. The Church's General Board of Education instructed Kimball to reopen the Academy as one of his first acts as president of the St. Joseph Stake, and he almost immediately became the guiding hand charting the school's destiny.¹³

The day he was sustained as stake president, Andrew Kimball dissolved the stake board of education and

Gila Academy

Gila Normal College

Gila Junior College

*Karl Emil Maeser,
principal, 1898*



immediately reorganized it with himself as chair and five other local influential church leaders as members. In March 1898 the new board announced that the stake and Thatcher Ward would jointly erect a \$1,500 addition to the academy. Work was to begin immediately so

that the addition would be ready for reopening in September. Contributions were solicited to finance this improvement.¹⁴

In April 1898, Kimball traveled to Brigham Young Academy in Provo, Utah, to interview candidates for the school's principal. He selected Emil Maeser, youngest son of Karl G. Maeser, as the academy's fourth principal. Maeser was promised an annual salary of \$900 plus \$60 in moving expenses.¹⁵ Kimball took Maeser with him on a tour of the stake to recruit students and solicit donations for reopening the school, even visiting the Latter-day Saint colonies in northern Mexico. In September, students showed up and the academy reopened.¹⁶

During his tenure, Maeser oversaw a modernization of the curriculum

*Andrew C. Peterson,
principal, 1905*

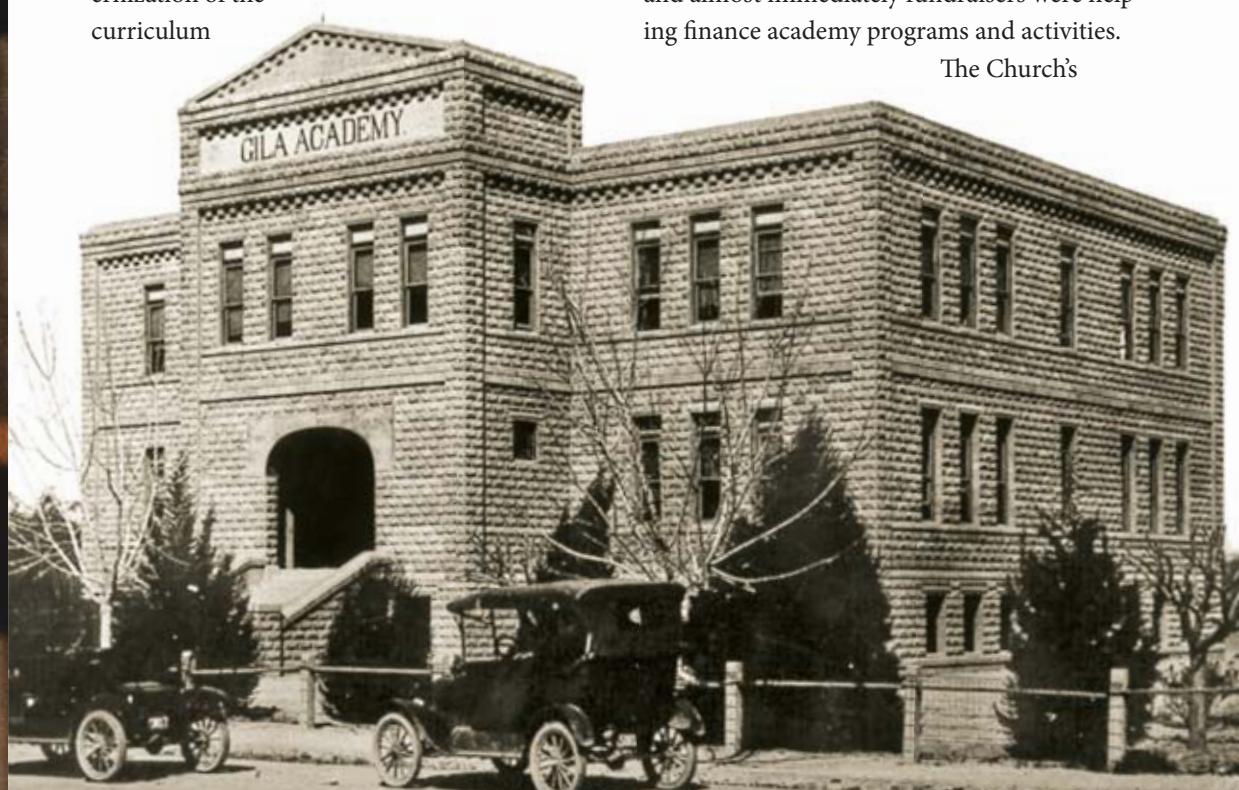


and hired additional faculty. During the brief Spanish-American War, which unfolded during the summer of 1898, Maeser encouraged male students to participate in military

drilling. Several classrooms were added to the ground floor of the original building during the 1898–99 academic year. By 1899 Maeser helped ensure that each teacher was paid three-fourths of his or her salary in cash and one-fourth in produce. Some teaching positions were even reconfigured as endowed chairs. In November 1899 the first endowed scholarships were offered to help recruit students, and there were a record one hundred thirty-five enrollees that fall.¹⁷

In March 1900 the Church of Jesus Christ gifted the academy two valuable tracts of land in the county which generated approximately \$1,000 in lease payments annually. About the same time, an academy alumni association was organized with forty-one charter members, and almost immediately fundraisers were helping finance academy programs and activities.

The Church's





General Board of Education appropriated an additional \$3,000 gift in 1901 and designated the academy the central Church school for the American southwest.¹⁸

By 1903 the academy's influence and activities expanded with the organization of an athletic club. Student and faculty donations had enabled the library to expand its holdings to 1,500 volumes. With its renovated assembly hall, the largest in the valley, the academy remained a vital social as well as academic center.¹⁹

As the academy continued to grow, Maeser and the man who succeeded him as principal in 1905, Andrew C. Peterson, understood the need, once again, to expand academy facilities. The Church appropriated \$2,200 to purchase a block in the heart of Thatcher. In September 1908 ground was broken for a new concrete building measuring fifty-five by eighty-two feet. At a projected cost of \$28,000 the building would have twenty-one rooms, including an assembly room, study hall, and library, together with faculty offices and a janitorial room.²⁰

In 1910 the building—eventually known as Old Main—was completed and the first classes were held there. Through fundraising generated by stake president Andrew Kimball's close relationship with many of the citizens of Gila Valley, all debts on the structure had been retired by December 1911 and the building was dedicated. Simultaneously, the school's name was changed to Gila Valley Academy; other improvements followed.²¹

In 1917, the academy finally received accreditation from the North Central Association of Colleges, Universities and Secondary Schools. To secure accreditation, the stake board had agreed to pay three-fourths of each faculty or administrative salary in cash and one-fourth in tithing script redeemable at ward tithing offices. Following accreditation, the University of Arizona joined the three largest Utah universities in giving their own students full credit for all academy courses.²²

But the school still struggled to recruit and retain faculty. Most faculty worked long hours and taught heavy course loads while being paid less than comparable faculty elsewhere. In addition, the stake education board had determined to gradually reshape the academy as a normal college, and its faculty would thus be required to hold master's degrees. To counter wavering faculty morale, the stake board discussed calling superior senior students as volunteer missionaries who would teach younger students and relieve some stress on full-time faculty—as had sometimes been done during Maeser's administration.²³

But such conversations were interrupted by another crisis: the Arizona Trust and Savings Bank of Thatcher—the bank with whom the academy had all its accounts—failed in 1917. The most immediate consequence was that teachers and staff could not cash their paychecks. The Church's General Board of Education again came to the rescue, providing an emergency appropriation of \$2,100 to cover outstanding paychecks.²⁴



As the academy prepared to officially transition to a normal school, one major challenge remained. As an accredited normal college, the academy would be required to have a college library of at least 5,000 books. By mid-1917 its library had only 1,647 volumes. Peterson asked for funding from the Church's general board to purchase the mandated number of books and received \$8,400—about seventy-five percent of what he had requested. Still, more than 3,355 additional books were purchased, Peterson's title was changed from "principal" to "president" as accreditors requested, and the academy taught its first pedagogical or normal courses in 1918.²⁵

But the academy's smooth transition to a normal school was disrupted by the American entry into World War I. In the freshman through senior classes, the number of male students declined by more than half in comparison with 1917 enrollments. The 1918 influenza pandemic also affected fall enrollment; by February 1919, the school had temporarily closed its doors, and classes were concluded via correspondence. When the academy reopened again in early 1920 it had added vocational programs and summer school courses, and plans were underway to publish the academy's first yearbook.²⁶

Seeing the school through its many changes between 1900 and the mid-1920s was Andrew Kimball, the president of Gila Stake for twenty-four years. When he died in Salt Lake City in August 1924, the school lost one of its longest and most ardent advocates. Harry L. Payne, who taught music at Gila Junior College and was second counselor in the stake presidency, became the new stake president.²⁷

By the summer of 1933, Gila Junior College became a public institution; it was officially renamed (briefly) Gila Junior College of Graham County. On June 3 the college and its buildings were turned over to the county, together with all relevant accounts, papers, and documents. Elder David O. McKay had delivered the final commencement address that May, and after forty-three years as a private Latter-day Saint school, the institution became a non-sectarian school and was renamed Eastern Arizona Junior College when its contracts with the Church ended on July 1.²⁸

Through its struggles and challenges, the school of many names has been and remains an important pillar of education in southeast Arizona. Most recently renamed Eastern Arizona College (EAC) in 1965, the school offers a variety of two-year degrees and certificate programs, together with selected bachelor's and master's programs through its affiliation with

Northern Arizona University.²⁹ The college is the enduring legacy of hundreds of personal and community sacrifices by the early pioneers of Gila Valley and a lasting witness of their commitment to learning and to the education of their children. □

1 Doctrine and Covenants, 55:4.

2 Grace McBride Larson and Laura McBride Smith, eds., "St. Joseph Stake Grows from Humble Beginnings," "Arizona's Oldest Schoolhouse," typescript, Pima Public Library, Pima, Arizona.

3 Ibid.

4 Wayne K. Hinton, *Utah: Unusual Beginnings to Unique Present* (2000), 71.

5 Helen R. Cole and James D. Claridge, eds., *Eastern Arizona College, the College of Many Names* (2019), 6; Layton was president of the St. Joseph Stake.

6 Cole and Claridge 7, 10, 11.

7 Cole and Claridge 12.

8 Cole and Claridge 15, 18. These were the homes of the remainder of the sixty-four students in February 1892: fifteen were from Central, five from Pima, five from Layton, and one from Utah.

9 Cole and Claridge 23

10 Cole and Claridge 23–5: "Laborers' Average Hourly Wages," *Economic Data, FRED.StLouisFed.org*, online. The average laborer received between fourteen and eighteen cents an hour in 1893 and worked sixty hours each week (ten-hour days, six days a week), so that the average weekly wage was between \$8.50 and \$10.80 (\$442 to \$562 a year).

11 Cole and Claridge 27, 32.

12 Cole and Claridge 34.

13 Larson and Smith, 'Christopher Layton: First President of St. Joseph Stake.' On his release, Layton was sustained as stake patriarch; he passed away in Kaysville, Utah, only months later.

14 Cole and Claridge 37. He was paid

an annual salary of \$900 (an average worker in 1898 earned about \$12.50 a week; Maeser was paid a third again that much; his salary was the equivalent of between \$31,700 and \$50,000 today) plus \$60 (just over \$2,110) in moving expenses.

15 Cole and Claridge 38.

16 Larson and Smith, 'Lest we Forget.'

17 Cole and Claridge 39, 40–1, 43.

18 Cole and Claridge 46.

19 Cole and Claridge 47.

20 Cole and Claridge 53.

21 Cole and Claridge 53, 60, 83.

22 Cole and Claridge 61, 69.

23 Cole and Claridge 68.

24 Cole and Claridge 94.

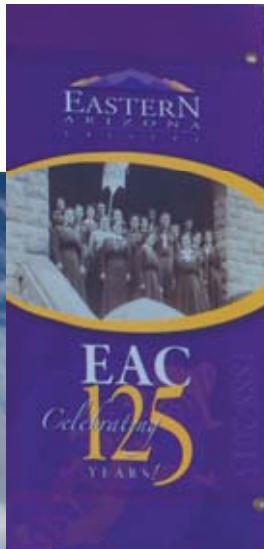
25 Cole and Claridge 62

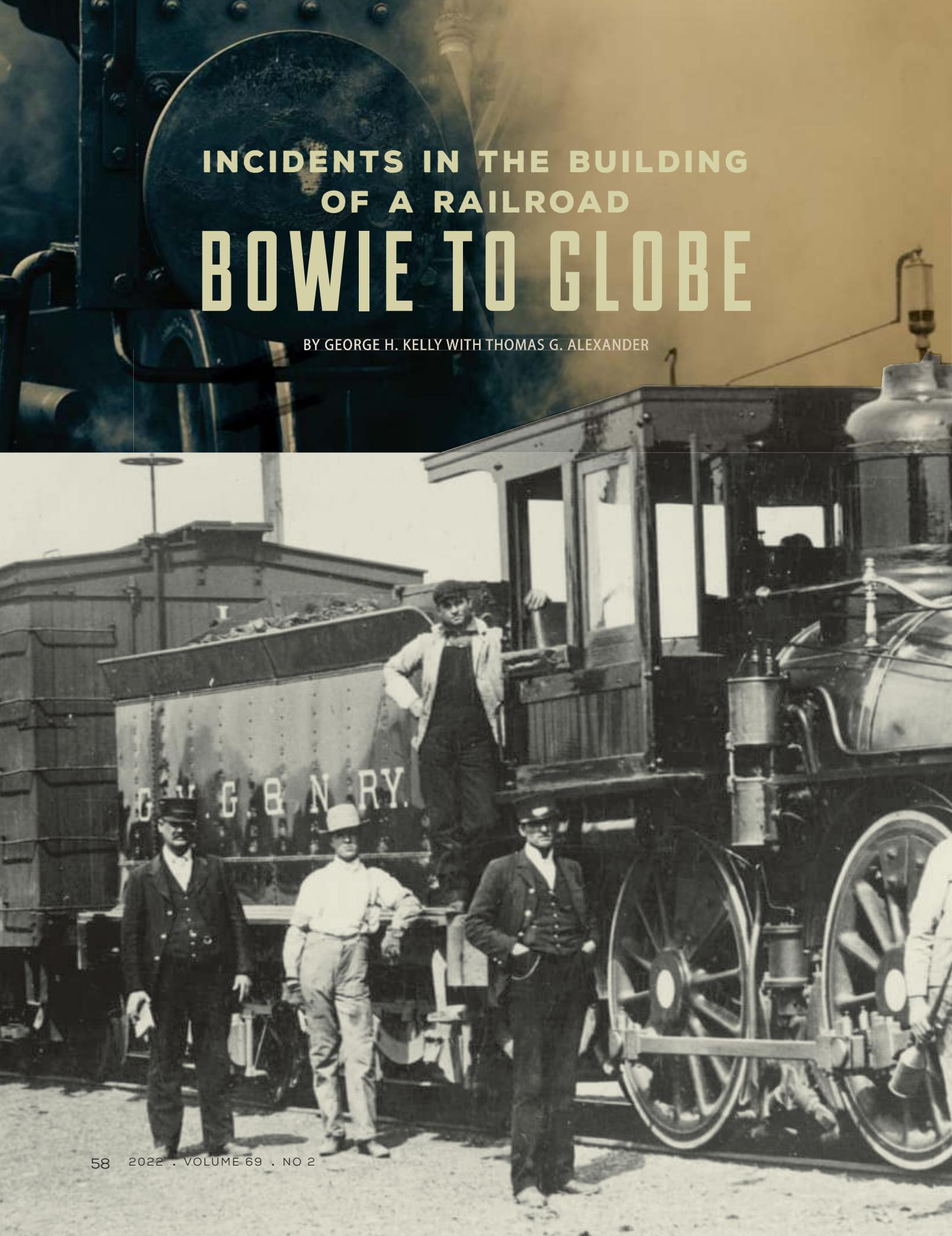
26 Cole and Claridge 73.

27 Cole and Claridge 36, 91, 95.

28 Cole and Claridge 141, 150.

29 "Brief EAC History," *Eastern Arizona College, About EAC, EAC.edu*, online.



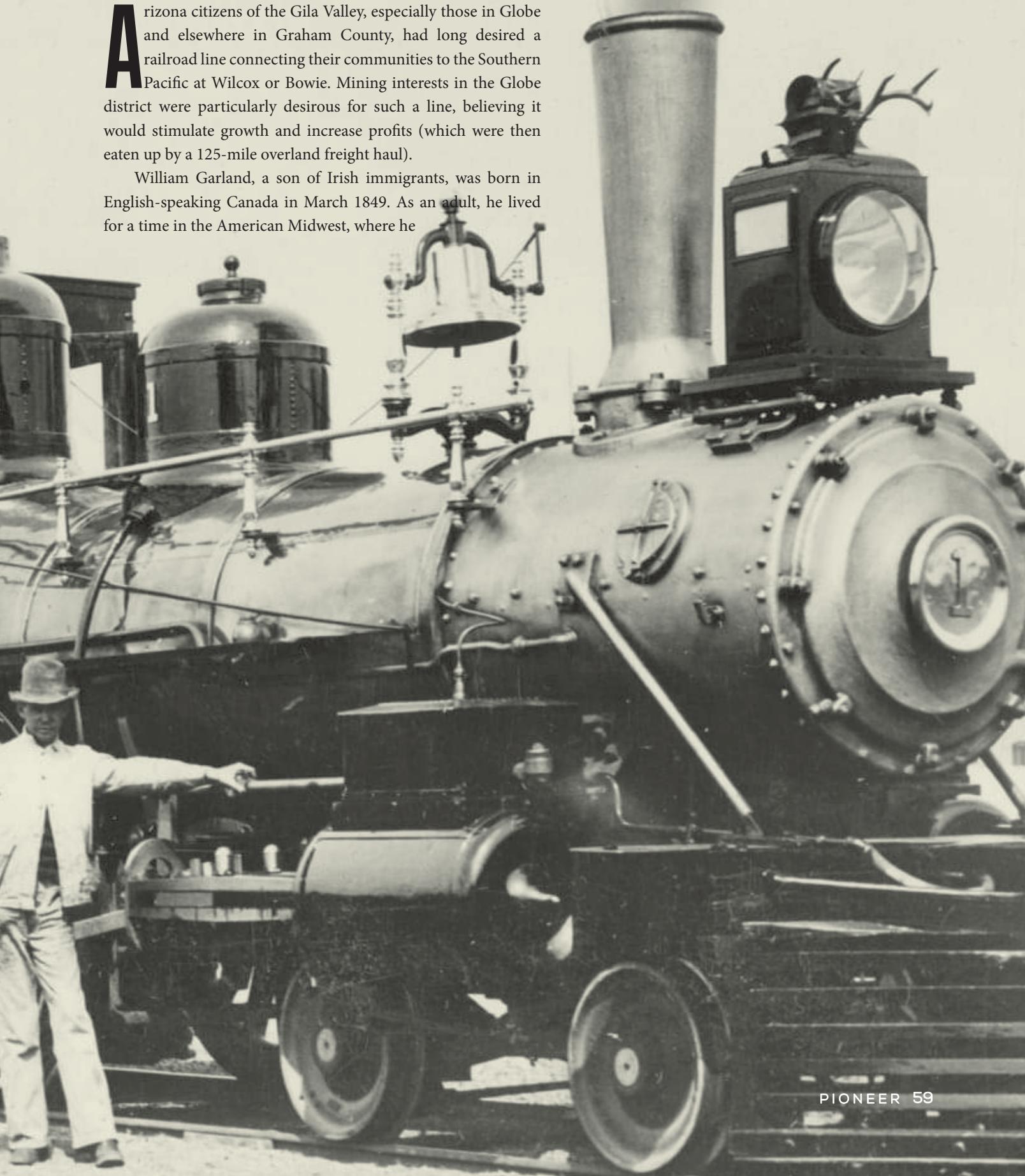


INCIDENTS IN THE BUILDING OF A RAILROAD BOWIE TO GLOBE

BY GEORGE H. KELLY WITH THOMAS G. ALEXANDER

Arizona citizens of the Gila Valley, especially those in Globe and elsewhere in Graham County, had long desired a railroad line connecting their communities to the Southern Pacific at Wilcox or Bowie. Mining interests in the Globe district were particularly desirous for such a line, believing it would stimulate growth and increase profits (which were then eaten up by a 125-mile overland freight haul).

William Garland, a son of Irish immigrants, was born in English-speaking Canada in March 1849. As an adult, he lived for a time in the American Midwest, where he



began investing in railroads and where he married at age thirty-nine. About 1890 he relocated his young family to Los Angeles, expanding his holdings to local rail lines and real estate. In 1892 Garland traveled to Gila Valley, perceiving opportunities for a lucrative rail deal linking the valley to Globe and other cities beyond. This was the beginning of what would become the Gila Valley, Globe & Northern Railway.

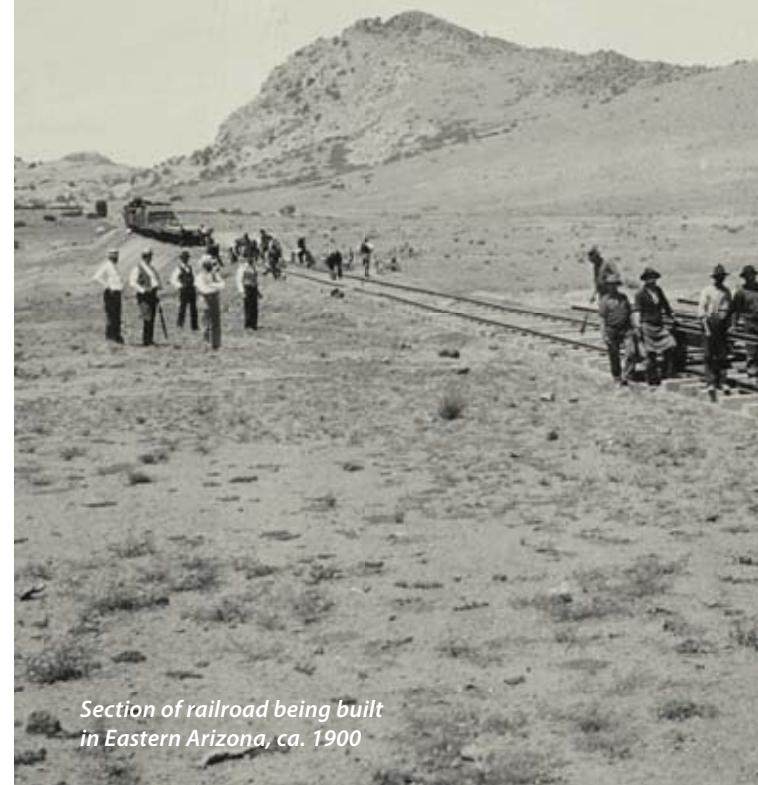
Before beginning construction Garland traveled throughout the valley, ostensibly to learn how its residents felt about a possible rail line connecting Bowie to Globe—but more accurately to solicit subsidies and aid from well-to-do residents.

Valley residents later discovered that, even before he had finished his interviews, Garland and his secretary had already established headquarters at Bowie and that crews had actually begun grading for terminal locations and side tracks before most Gila Valley residents knew anything about the railroad. Initial work proceeded without hindrance through 1894, and by early 1895 crews had laid the track as far as Pima in central Graham County.

THE SULLIVAN FRACAS

Garland's crews had surveyed the rail line, negotiated for rights-of-way, and constructed through the cultivated area of the Gila Valley with little difficulty until they met up with Patrick Sullivan and his wife. Upset because the route chosen by the railroad cut through a tract of land they owned, the Sullivans adopted an unusual method for bringing the railroad company to the table in order to settle a breached right-of-way contract resulting in damage to their land.

On February 1, 1895, when the premiere train from Bowie to Pima arrived at Sullivan's tract of land, the engineer discovered that Sullivan had built a board shanty on the railroad track and strung a wire fence across the track about twenty feet from the crude structure. Sullivan and his wife stood between the wire fence



Section of railroad being built in Eastern Arizona, ca. 1900

and the improvised house. With guns at the ready, they awaited the arrival of the iron horse. With the Sullivans were a good many of their neighbors who had come to what local wits called "Fort Sullivan" to witness the impending conflict.

The train's engineer stopped his locomotive a short distance from the wire fence. As it happened, Garland was aboard, and he angrily alighted, walked to the wire fence, and began loosening it. Confronting Garland at the fence, Sullivan leveled a double-barreled shotgun at him, ordering him to keep his hands off Sullivan's property. After looking for a short moment into the mouth of the weapon, Garland retreated to the train and ordered the engineer to back it up to Solomonville,

where he swore out a warrant for Sullivan's arrest.

The local sheriff rode the train back with Garland, arrested Sullivan, and brought him before Justice of the Peace W. J. Parks. Sullivan was released on bond, but while he was detained, Garland and his crew took down the fence and razed "Fort Sullivan." The train then





proceeded to the end of the track, near Pima.¹

The next morning, when the train again arrived at Sullivan's property, Garland's crew found that Sullivan had again erected "Fort Sullivan," blocking the train's progress. Sullivan showed as much determination as he had the day before. This time, however, the sheriff was aboard the train, ensuring that Garland's crew could remove the fence and raze the shanty without attendant hostilities from Sullivan and his wife.

Most people thought this would end the trouble, but when the train approached the Sullivans' property on the third day, "Fort Sullivan" again loomed up to bar its passage. Once again, Garland was aboard the train; once again, the train was backed up to Solomonville, this time to procure warrants for the arrests of both Sullivan and his wife.

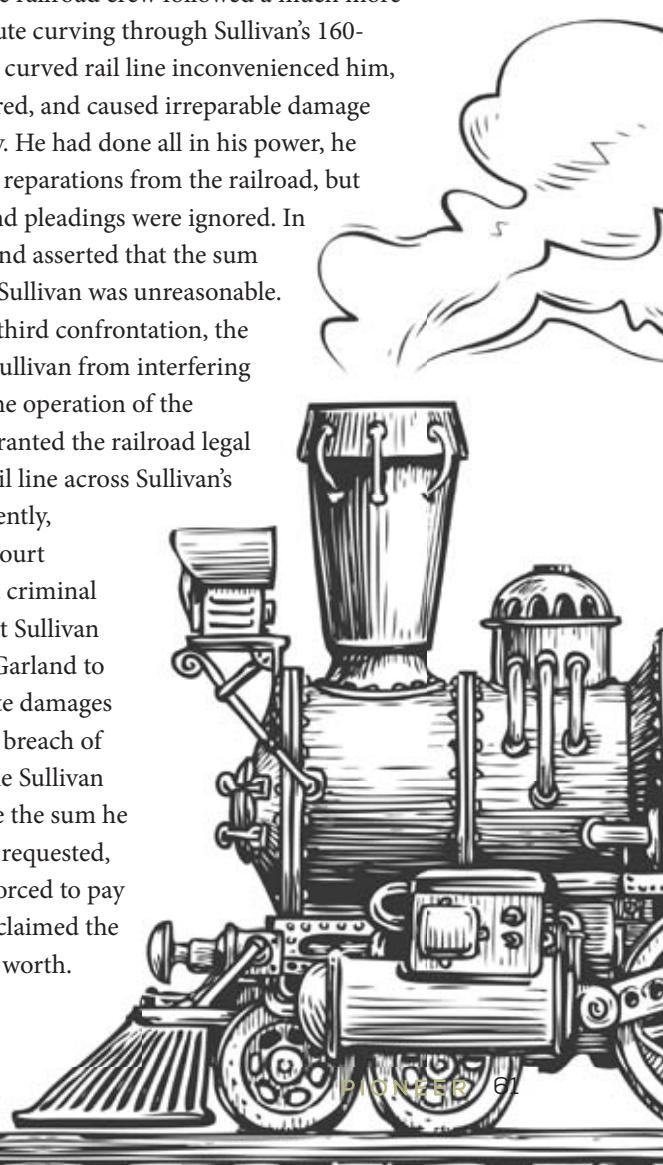
The peace officers and train returned to the seat of war about three o'clock that afternoon. Another large crowd had gathered to witness the outcome of this third confrontation. Sullivan and his wife stood just inside the improvised wire fence, and when Sheriff Wight read the warrant, Sullivan said he would not go unless the officers literally carried him off his land. The sheriff explained that Sullivan had placed himself in the criminal position of resisting arrest. Finally understanding the inevitable outcome, Sullivan and his

wife became more reasonable and allowed the sheriff to lead them gently away. The trainmen again tore down the shack, and the train proceeded safely to Pima. The Sullivans were once more taken to Solomonville where they gave bonds for their appearance in court.

Although the sheriff arrested only the Sullivans, the two parties in the controversy remained antagonistic. Sullivan insisted that the railroad company had entered a large section of his land without permission and had laid track without holding a legal right-of-way. He had promised, he said, to cede the right-of-way through his land only if the railway ran through it on a straight north-south line, and Garland had agreed to his terms.

Unfortunately, Sullivan had made a necessary trip to California just before the graders reached his land. While he was gone, instead of grading the line as they had agreed, the railroad crew followed a much more convenient route curving through Sullivan's 160-acre tract. The curved rail line inconvenienced him, Sullivan declared, and caused irreparable damage to his property. He had done all in his power, he said, to secure reparations from the railroad, but his requests and pleadings were ignored. In defense, Garland asserted that the sum demanded by Sullivan was unreasonable.

After the third confrontation, the court barred Sullivan from interfering further with the operation of the railroad and granted the railroad legal access to its rail line across Sullivan's land. Subsequently, however, the court also dismissed criminal charges against Sullivan and required Garland to pay appropriate damages to Sullivan for breach of contract. While Sullivan did not receive the sum he had originally requested, Garland was forced to pay more than he claimed the damages were worth.



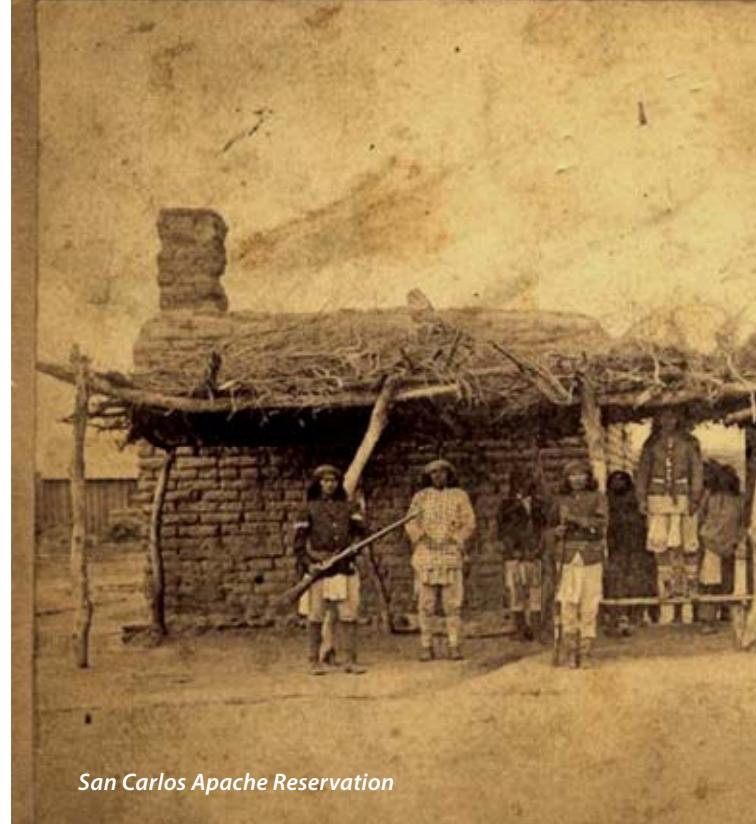
TROUBLE ON THE RESERVATION

Getting a right-of-way from Patrick Sullivan was easy compared to the trouble Garland encountered when he sought permission to build his railroad across the San Carlos Apache Reservation. As construction neared the reservation, Mark A. Smith, then Arizona's territorial delegate in Congress, secured the passage of a bill granting a right-of-way through the San Carlos Reservation. The measure passed both the House and Senate by unanimous vote, but President Grover Cleveland vetoed it, stating that he would not approve it until it included a clause requiring Indigenous peoples on the reservation to consent to the railroad right-of-way through their lands. As passed by Congress in 1895, the revised bill included that provision, and Cleveland signed it.

After reviewing the law, Secretary of the Interior J. Sterling Morton interpreted the provision in question to mean that *all* the Apache on the reservation had to consent to the right-of-way. So interpreted, the bill presented an insurmountable obstacle to railroad construction. Railroad crews completed construction to the reservation line, and a terminal town at that spot—known as Geronimo—functioned with some commercial importance for three years.

Well before that time expired, some whites believed they could extort money from the railroad by promising to use their influence with Apache leaders to garner support for the right-of-way. Garland declined, instead determining to wait for a more favorable political climate. This came in late 1896 with the election of William McKinley as president. The McKinley administration determined that the relevant provision of the bill required only that a majority of the reservation's Apache consent to the railroad right-of-way.

After accomplishing necessary groundwork over the next year and more in anticipation of a reservation-wide Apache vote, Sedgwick Rice, the white Indian Agent assigned to San Carlos, coordinated a reservation celebration to coincide with the vote on February 8, 1898. Garland himself headed the list of invited white guests; also listed were GVG&N vice-president E. A.



San Carlos Apache Reservation

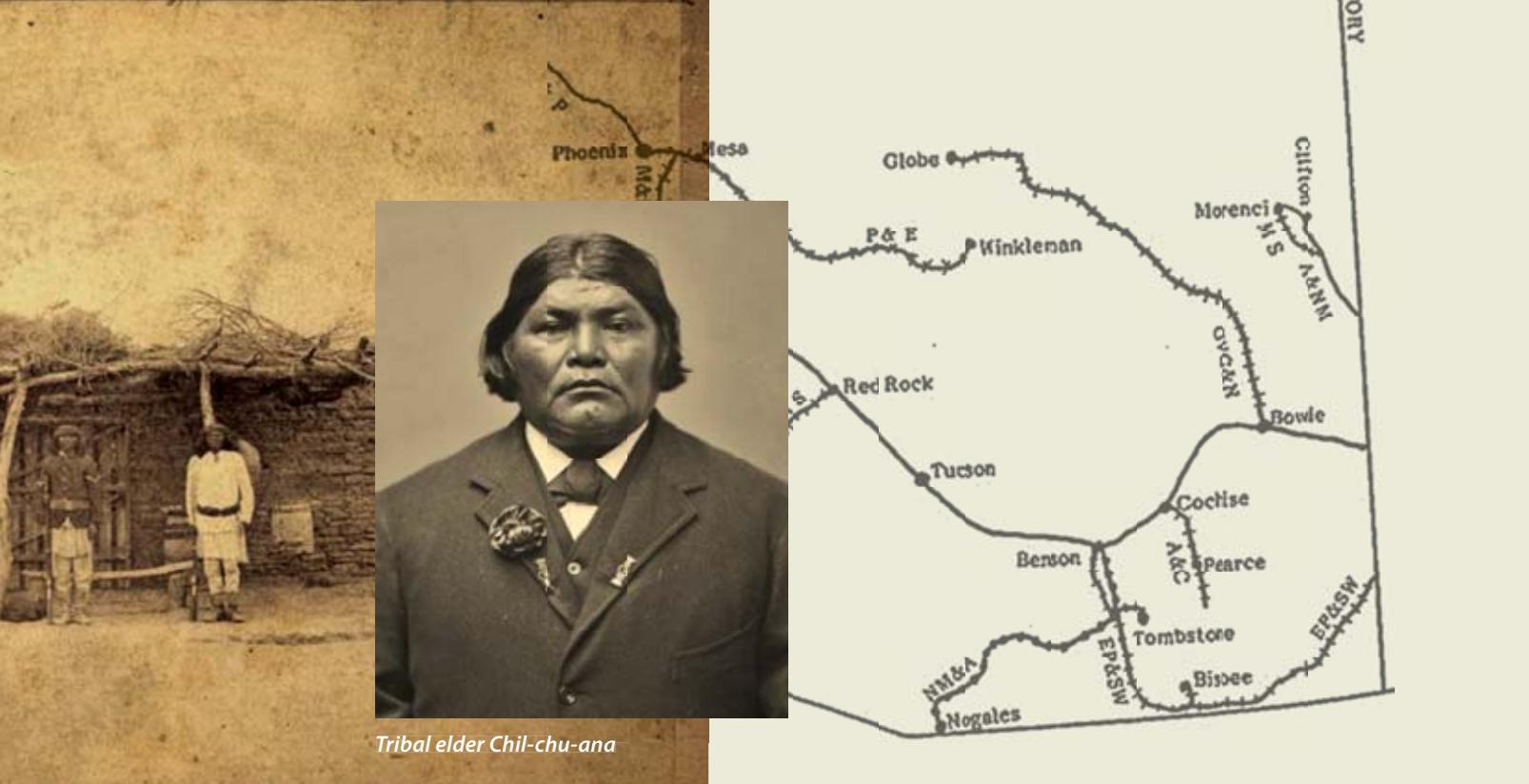
Cutter, Southern Pacific chief engineer William Hood, and *Graham County Bulletin* editor George H. Kelly.²

When the morning before the voting day arrived, the Apache were allegedly flooding into the area from every direction, arriving in carts and wagons, on horseback, and on foot. Garland had provided a grand entertainment for the men who would vote the following day—and for their families and extended families as well. All who attended received generous complimentary stores of beef, flour, beans, lard, sugar, coffee, and tobacco.

In addition to the hundreds of campfires lighting the evening sky following the distribution of the food, and the joyous cooking and eating that then ensued, there was traditional dancing through the night. In his report of the event, Kelly wrote that such a feast had never before been provided for the peoples on the San Carlos Reservation, and there had been none like it since.

Chauncey Depew, the great after-dinner speaker, once said that he never felt in better humor than just after being well-fed, and William Garland no doubt concluded that there was no better way to gain the good will of the Apache than by feeding them. To make success doubly sure, he arranged for a second ration of goods to be distributed at noon on the day of the vote.

That afternoon, before the formal voting, several speakers addressed the assembled crowd. First was Rice,



Tribal elder Chil-chu-ana

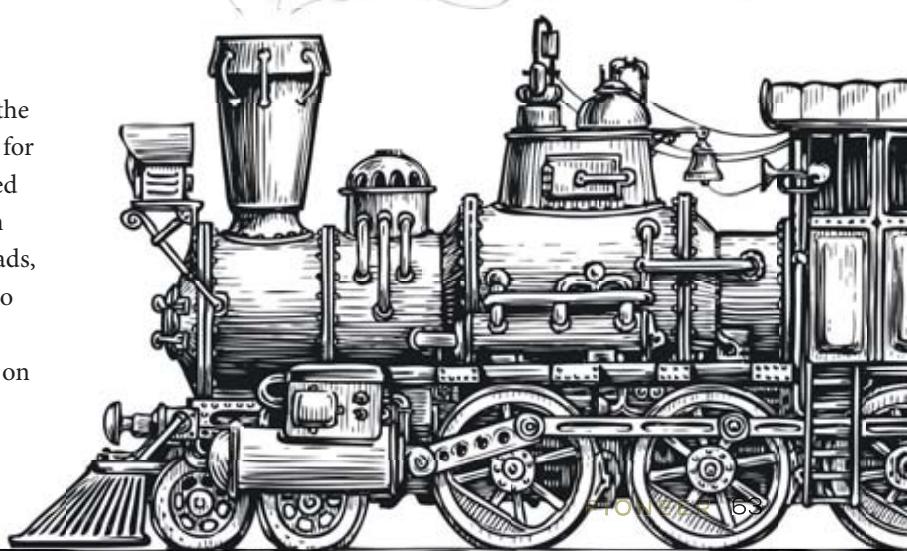
the Indian Agent, who explained through interpreters the details of the agreement. Next, several tribal elders spoke—Chil-chu-ana, Saba Mucha, Antonio Nal-goda, and Bai-lish, known as one of the shrewdest and wisest men on the reservation. Bai-lish told of going to Washington with Chil-chu-ana and of seeing incredible riches there, implying that his fellows should not be flattered into giving away their right-of-way for too small an inheritance.

Led by their respective elders, all Apache males then voted. Each stood in front of the council table where they answered in response to the call of their names. The voting lasted for two hours, and of all present there was only one “no” vote recorded. Financial details of the agreement were then worked out between Garland and his associates and the tribal leaders. Garland offered \$6,000 for the right-of-way; tribal leaders demanded \$10,000. Eventually, a compromise amount of \$8,000 was reached. The signed agreement included three important elements: first, the Apache were to receive \$8,000 as a tribe in exchange for a permanent right-of-way; second, the railroad agreed to pay individual Apache for all improved land taken and for any damages to Apache buildings, fences, roads, and ditches during construction (with the amounts to be determined by the agent and the relevant Apache owners); and third, reservation Apache would travel on the railroad free of charge for the next thirty years.

Garland lost no time starting construction, and within a year of his signing the agreement with the Apache, trains ran through the San Carlos Apache Reservation from Bowie to Globe. Of course, this accomplishment occurred more than three years later than the unseasoned and somewhat arrogant Garland had originally imagined. □

1 An interesting sidenote: publicity photos for the new rail line taken in 1895 feature Gila Valley, Globe, and Northern Railway Company #1, a remodel of Central Pacific Railroad #60, *Jupiter*, one of two locomotives featured at the driving of the Golden Spike at Promontory, Utah, in May 1869 (see *Facebook.com, Utah State History/posts*, 10 May 2019).

2 Kelly wrote the original version of this article, published in 1898 in the *Graham County Bulletin*.





Ebenezer Bryce *and the move to* Arizona

BY GALE REX BRYCE AND KAREN R. BRYCE

In July 1880 Ebenezer Bryce sold his farm inside Bryce Canyon—the canyon and the future national park were named for him—and temporarily moved his family to Panguitch, Utah. That fall he sent one of his sons, David Andrew, to New Mexico and two others, William Henry (Bill) and Alma Nephi, to Arizona to seek better farmland and a warmer climate for Mary Ann, who had been bedridden for several months with serious respiratory problems. David and Alma returned early the following summer; Ebenezer and Mary Ann received word that Bill had been killed by Apache warriors. Despite the tragic news, David and Alan's report was very positive, and within weeks the family had packed up and started for Arizona.

Ten of Ebenezer and Mary Ann's twelve children made the trip. Bill did not, of course, and Ann Jeanette stayed in Cannonville, Utah, with her husband and three children. Together, fifteen people managed three horse-drawn wagons, driving livestock alongside.¹

Although Ebenezer and Mary Ann traveled with three of their four adult sons, it was not a journey to be taken lightly, and—unlike many other Saints making the trek to Arizona—they were a single family journeying alone. Because they were driving a herd of cattle, progress was slow. Especially memorable for younger members of the party was the crossing of the Colorado River and the traversing of the jagged landscape on either side of it. From House Rock Springs, pioneers traveled

along the Vermilion Cliffs, to and across the Colorado River, up the Hog's Back [known today as Lee's Backbone or Lee's Ridge] to the plateau, then down across to Bitter Springs and Limestone Tanks. They proceeded to Willow Springs, and then to Moenkopi, where they made connections with the Little Colorado River, which they followed from Black Falls to Grand Falls; they next crossed the plateau to what is today Winslow.²

For many, following the treacherous trail across Lee's Backbone was more terrifying than crossing the

Colorado itself. "It didn't seem possible," writes historian Roberta Clayton, "for the horses to pull the wagons up, as the road was so steep and the boulders so big, and it was just as bad on the dugway on the other side." She concludes: "Everyone who ever came over that piece of road had great cause for thankfulness they were not killed."³ In her autobiography, Dortheia Jorgensen Bryce, Ebenezer's daughter-in-law, summarized the perils of travel through this region:

*The road was steep and rough. In crossing the Colorado River, the wagons had to be tied with ropes to keep them from tipping. When we crossed Lee's Ridge, I was asleep in the wagon. The rope broke and let the wagon roll down the mountain. Everyone expected the wagon to be dashed to pieces, but it didn't even tip over, and I continued my nap. All agreed it was the Lord's Hand that saved me.*⁴

Eastern Arizona and New Mexico

After a difficult journey, the Bryce family arrived in northeastern Arizona in the late fall of 1880 and, after building rough shelters, determined to winter on Silver Creek in Snowflake. One evening, a stranger approached them. As he drew nearer, they realized it was Bill, still very much alive. He had explored several areas of Arizona but was most impressed with what he saw in Gila Valley.

The following February, the Bryces moved to the mountain ranch area of Nutrioso in east-central Arizona, about twelve miles south and slightly east of present-day Eagar and just west of the New Mexico border. They

spent the summer of 1882 there, raising and shearing sheep they had acquired in St. Johns in partial remuneration for their Utah ranch and its sheep. Wool was hauled to Albuquerque, New Mexico. In September they moved their sheep down into the Williams Valley—a half-mile wide and two miles long—just inside the New Mexico state line.⁵

Regarding their next move, Ebenezer's autobiography succinctly declares, "Sold our sheep in Silver City [New Mexico] and moved on to Pima, Arizona. Arrived there November 17th [1882]." The roundabout trip from Utah to Pima had taken over a year. Mary Ann, especially, must have been relieved to end their long journey and find hope of some permanency in their lives.

Gila Valley

Ebenezer and his large family added considerably to the small community of Pima upon their arrival in mid-November 1882. Their first "home" in Pima consisted of two side-by-side tents with board floors and an adjoining stockade kitchen: four poles set into the ground and joined with crosspieces and a roof of brush and mud, providing some shelter.⁶ They dug a well nearby to supply culinary water. They lived in this home for the next two years, and although it was not yet the home Mary Ann hoped for, at least it was better than the wagons the family had been living in since leaving Utah.⁷

Having established a home of sorts, Ebenezer's next pressing task was to establish a farm to provide food for



Lee's Backbone

his family. And before he could plant or care for crops, he had to secure adequate irrigation water, a process he initiated during the spring of 1883. Naturally, the Gila River itself carried ample water, but canals and ditches had to be dug to convey the water from the river to individual farms and fields. The earliest non-Latter-day Saint settlers in the valley had discovered a prehistoric irrigation system evidencing the advanced civilizations of ancient peoples of North America,⁸ and several short canals had been constructed by European American settlers during the early 1870s. An anonymous hand-drawn map from about 1879 shows twelve ditches or canals being fed by an approximately twenty-mile segment of the Gila River. But given the farm site he had chosen, Ebenezer found none of the existing canals useful.⁹

Establishing Bryce, Arizona

The land that Ebenezer had his eye on was north of the Pima settlement: fertile, promising land on the other side of the Gila River. First, though, was the matter of irrigation. “Started to build the Bryce ditch on the north side of the river,” he later remembered, “and finished about the fifteenth of April 1883.” Having secured water, Ebenezer and his sons traded four horses for the land, buying it from early squatters not affiliated with the Church and not interested in making any improvements to the land.¹⁰

To create arable farmland from the bottoms along the north side of the Gila River, Ebenezer and his sons arduously removed thickets of mesquite trees. Because mesquite is a much harder wood than maple or oak, and because it has both tap and lateral roots, this was a nearly herculean task.¹¹ After Ebenezer and his sons had cut off a tree at the stump, they severed tap roots and larger lateral roots. Then a team of horses or oxen formerly used to pull wagons was used to pull up the stump. After painstaking



ingly clearing each acre of land, Ebenezer and his sons planted it, initially producing little more than was necessary to meet their large family’s needs. By the spring of 1884 they had cleared enough land to warrant the expansion of Bryce Ditch, turning it into a true canal.

In 1884 there were five Bryce sons over the age of twenty. After the Bryces’ arrival in southeast Arizona, all five sons initially worked together with their father. Gradually, the older sons went in different directions, establishing farms and families of their own. Ebenezer Park, commonly known as Ebb, was already married when the Bryces traveled to Arizona; following their arrival, he spent time with his father and brothers but also worked to establish his own farm. David Andrew remained unmarried; contracting smallpox while hauling wood at the Vulture Mine in Maricopa County, he passed away in July 1887.¹² Bill decided to return to Utah and was married there in 1885, establishing homes in Price and, later, in Roosevelt. Alma Nephi and George Alvin were married in 1887 and 1886, respectively, and established their own homes close to those of other family members. Ebenezer’s sixth son was Joseph Walter, only fifteen in 1887, but by that point already assuming a man’s load in helping his father.¹³

In March 1885 Ebenezer completed a frame home near that of his son Ebb in the family settlement, and Mary Ann and the younger children were finally able to move out of their makeshift housing in Pima.¹⁴ By this time Ebenezer’s extended family had begun calling their settlement Bryce. It is understandable that they sometimes felt isolated in their tiny community across the river from Pima. The southern border of the Apache Reservation was only a few miles to the north of them, and at least six of Ebenezer’s children—in telling their



own life stories—remembered being troubled by Apache threats and feeling they must always carry a gun. George Alvin was one of the valley's minutemen assigned to monitor Apache movements. Occasionally, mounting tensions meant that families in Bryce had to cross the river to Pima for safety. Women and children took refuge in the Pima Dance Hall at night, and the men kept watch outside.¹⁵

Gradually, other families with young children moved into the area and a schoolhouse was built—also serving as a meetinghouse for Latter-day Saints. The Bryce Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ was organized at Ebenezer's home by Apostles Francis M. Lyman and John Henry Smith in 1890. The town officially became Bryce when a US Post Office was established there in 1891. During the early 1890s Ebenezer added significant acreage to his original farm, 153 acres in 1891 and 151 in 1895.

Supporting Family

While Ebenezer was an experienced farmer and rancher, he was by trade a builder. In 1884, just after finishing the Bryce Ditch, Ebenezer recorded that, "in company with others," he "bought a sawmill, planer, and shingle mill, so our people could build better houses, the people having much sickness, chills and fevers." His partners in the business were Hyrum Weech, Joseph Cluff, and John Moody, men he had met on his arrival in Gila Valley. Given his extensive experience with mills of all kinds, Ebenezer managed lumber production; Weech oversaw the selling of lumber at Pima. This partnership lasted only until 1886 when Ebenezer writes that he "gave up the business and lost pretty heavily getting out of it."¹⁶

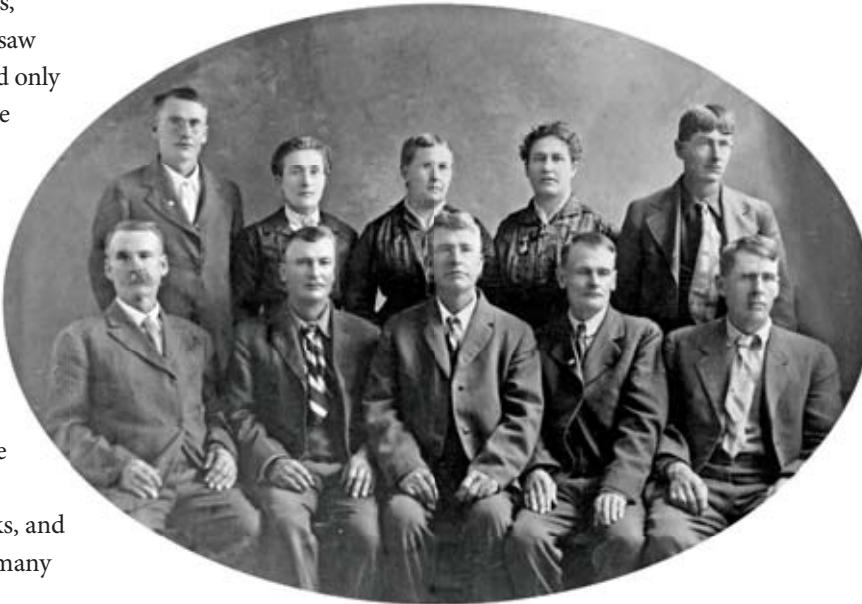
While Ebenezer blamed "failing health" for his decision, he was still active and energetic, and he was not yet finished as a millwright. In 1887 he recorded that he had contracted "with three of the boys"—his three oldest surviving sons—and "started a grist mill." The mill was operated by waterpower supplied by Bryce Ditch; it operated for several years under the name Bryce & Sons. Unfortunately, heavy warm rains in December 1905 caused rapid melting of snowpacks, and resultant flooding along the Gila River destroyed many properties, including the Bryce mill.¹⁷

While ranching was always an avocation for Ebenezer, over time he built up a significant herd of cattle. He later provided his sons and grandsons with cattle to help them get started in ranching, and he liked to ride the range and keep track of his herds and those of his sons. As he got older, he began hitching up a buggy instead of riding horseback. He didn't worry about the lack of roads, but his sons did. One of them usually rode with him to keep his buggy from tipping over when he found himself on steep terrain.¹⁸

About 1910—around the time Ebenezer turned eighty—he decided he needed a new barn. He realized he was too old to build it himself, and he hired younger local men to do the work. But he had a hard time staying out of the process and was at the barn nearly every day giving directions and checking work. One day he climbed up to inspect the rafters and fell. He was in severe pain for many weeks, but still periodically monitored the progress of his barn.¹⁹

Later Years: Family History & Temple Work

Ebenezer's love of the temple perhaps began with his own sealing to his beloved Mary Ann. Because their sealing occurred after the birth of their four oldest children, Ebenezer was determined that those children, as adults, be sealed to him and his wife. In late July 1893, he and Mary Ann started for the Manti Temple in central Utah.

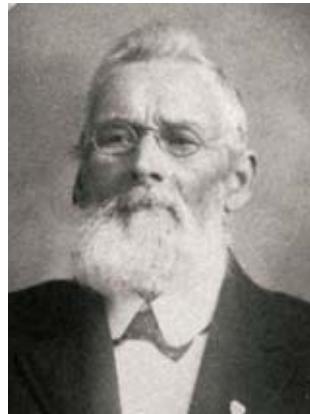


Ten of Ebenezer and Mary Ann's twelve children; see FamilySearch.org, online

Their three oldest surviving children—Ebenezer Park, Ann Jeanette, and William Henry—joined them there. They spent beautiful hours together in the temple, and the three living children, together with deceased son David Andrew, were sealed to their joyful parents.

In early 1896 Ebenezer determined to reconnect with his family in Scotland. He sent a general-delivery letter to Tullibody, Scotland, which was forwarded to his oldest (and only surviving) brother, William, in nearby Stirling. The two brothers corresponded with delight, as it had been nearly fifty years since Ebenezer had left Scotland at age seventeen. In their letters, they discussed genealogy, and William traced back family lines as far as he could. Ebenezer learned that his only surviving sister, Margaret Wright, had immigrated to the United States and was then living in Massachusetts.²⁰

Mary Ann passed away in April 1897, just four months past her sixtieth birthday. She had lived in multiple areas of the US and Canada, had literally



established homes in the wilderness, had borne twelve children and raised them to adulthood, and had endured health and survival challenges with faith and perseverance. Like many pioneer women, Mary Ann was a homemaker, seamstress, and candlemaker; she carded, spun, and knit the wool that came from

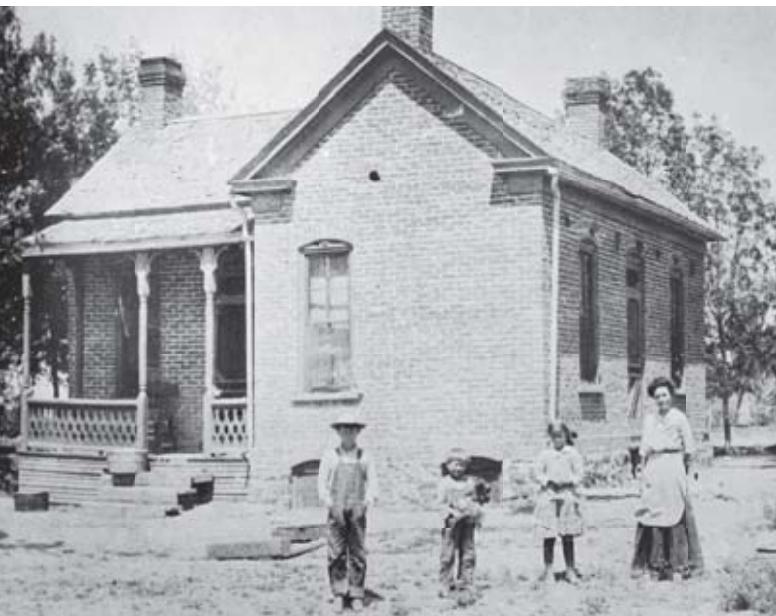
her family's sheep; and she was a deeply spiritual and devoted wife and mother.

After Mary Ann's death, Ebenezer asked his stake president, Andrew Kimball, if he could be set apart as a genealogy missionary. Following First Presidency approval, Ebenezer was set apart as a missionary "to go to Lynn, Mass., to visit his relatives and look up genealogy."²¹ Traveling to Massachusetts at his own expense, he acquired important genealogical data and, in 1898, was reunited with his sister Margaret.

During each of the next several years Ebenezer made annual trips to Salt Lake City to visit family members in Utah and do temple work for his ancestors. To collect additional genealogical information, he returned to Scotland—after more than sixty years away—in June 1908. Not surprisingly, his children objected to his traveling across the Atlantic, but he informed them that he was old enough to take care of himself.²²

Ebenezer was ordained a stake patriarch in May 1898 and served in that calling until his death in 1913. During the last decade or so of his life, Ebenezer lived in Bryce with his married daughter Jane; until they married, Ebenezer's two youngest sons also lived with Jane. Ebenezer loved to read, and many of his grandchildren commented on his unusually large library. Jane herself saw him as "honest to the letter," as a man who was "liberal in the community with labor and means." Concerning tithes and offerings, he taught his children that "they were no good to their community if they were not liberal with their donations."²³

By late 1912 Ebenezer was suffering from various chronic ailments; he died in late September 1913 of kidney failure and was laid to rest beside Mary Ann in the



Built in 1897, the Ebenezer and Mary Ann Bryce home still stands and is located at 6384 North Bryce-Eden Road in Bryce, Arizona. See ebenezerbryce.com, online.

Bryce Cemetery. His will dictated that \$1,000 be placed in an account "for the Purpose of tracing the genealogy of the Family and Attending to the Work for our Dear Relatives in the Temples of our God belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ."²⁴ □

1 Unless otherwise credited, information in this article—including details of the Bryces' move to Arizona—is taken from two informal, privately published biographies of Ebenezer Bryce, one by Elnora Bryce and the other by Wendell Bryce, both grandchildren of Ebenezer. Wendell's account says the family drove "some 100 head of stock." Both biographies are available at "Ebenezer Bryce," *Memories*, *FamilySearch.org*, online. The pioneer party included Ebenezer's oldest son, Ebenezer Park (Ebb), his wife Diana Packer, and their two young children.

2 H. Dean Garrett and Clark V. Johnson, eds., "Traveling the Honeymoon Trail: An Act of Love and Faith," *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History—Arizona* (1989).

3 Roberta Flake Clayton, *Pioneer Women of Arizona* (1900), 245.

4 Dortheia Jorgensen Bryce autobiography, privately printed, n.d. Copy in possession of the authors (grandson and great-granddaughter of Dortheia).

5 The valley was named for G. Calvin Williams, who settled there in 1879. See Kevin Blaine Williams, "The Life, Religion,

and Family of George Calvin Williams and Martha Bearl Easterly," typescript (n.d.), 15–6, "George Calvin Williams," *Ancestry.com*, online.

6 William R. Ridgeway, "Bryce Canyon is Memorial to Pioneer Farmer," *Arizona Republic* (12 Jul 1953).

7 Mamie Bryce Merrill, *The Life of Ebenezer Park Bryce*, "Ebenezer Park Bryce," *Memories*, *FamilySearch.org*, online.

8 P. J. Lynch, "Gila Valley Irrigation District, Safford Arizona," report prepared for P. G. Spilsbury, President, Arizona Industrial Congress, 3 May 1928, PDF online.

9 Oran A. Williams, "Settlement and Growth of the Gila Valley in Graham County as a Mormon Colony, 1879 to 1900," MA thesis, U of Arizona, 1937; available online.

10 Bryce Ward, Manuscript history and historical reports, 1883 1942; Church History Library, Salt Lake City.

11 Mesquite taproots can extend downward more than one hundred feet; lateral roots can spread fifty feet in any direction from the trunk.

12 Following his death, David was sealed to Amanda Malinda Mattice, the deceased sister of John Warner Mattice, husband of David's younger sister Jane Louisa. Indeed, John and Jane Louisa may have acted as proxies for the sealing following their own marriage in the St. George Temple in October 1888.

13 Elnora Bryce, work cited; Wendell Bryce, work cited; "Ebenezer [Adam]

Bryce," *Memories*, *FamilySearch.org*, online; "Biography of David Andrew Bryce," *Memories*, "David Andrew Bryce," *FamilySearch.org*, online.

14 Bryce Ward manuscript history and historical reports, 1883 1942, Church History Library, Salt Lake City. The lumber for these homes had to be hauled over primitive roads from Tucson, 160 miles away. This was likely a primary motivation for Ebenezer's later determining to establish a lumber mill in Bryce.

15 "George Alvin Bryce," *Memories*, *FamilySearch.org*, online.

16 Elnora Bryce, work cited; Wendell Bryce, work cited.

17 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, *Southeast Arizona Flood History*, Dec 1906, online.

18 Delta Welker Bryce, *Our Family Book* (Salt Lake City, 1999), 575–91.

19 Ibid.

20 Teresa Whitehead, Ebenezer Bryce history, privately printed (2021); "Ebenezer Bryce," *Memories*, *FamilySearch.org*, online.

21 Andrew Kimball, letter to the First Presidency, 23 May 1898, original on letterhead of the Indian Territory Mission, copy in possession of authors.

22 A. Elnora Bryce, in Delta Welker Bryce, 508.

23 Jane Louise Bryce Mattice, typewritten address delivered at Bryce family reunion, 8–9 Aug 1951, hand edits, "Ebenezer Bryce," *Memories*, *FamilySearch.org*, online.

24 Whitehead, online.

Gila Valley



**SAINTS ARRIVE
IN THE
SALT LAKE VALLEY
JULY 24, 1847**



LDS COLONIZATION IN ARIZONA: Little Colorado River and Gila Valley

The first European American in Gila Valley was William Munson who, in **1873**, built a small adobe house and store. Jewish entrepreneur **Isadore Elkan Solomon** and family arrived in "Munsonville" during the mid-1870s, and the community became Solomonville.

SOLOMONVILLE



1846

MORMON BATTALION

Trekked across southern Arizona in 1846 on their way to San Diego, California.



Jacob Hamblin and a few companions were called to preach the gospel to Moqui or Hopi Indians living east of the Colorado River.

1858

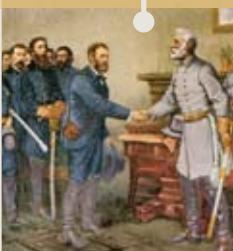
Jacob Hamblin and a few companions were called to preach the gospel to Moqui or Hopi Indians living east of the Colorado River.

1860

END OF THE
CIVIL WAR

1860s

Latter-day Saints began establishing isolated ranches and small communities on the Arizona Strip—between the Colorado River and the Utah border.

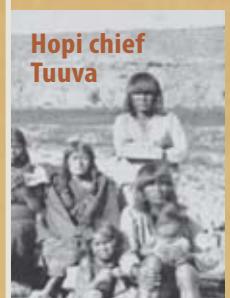


1861

When the Civil War began April 12, 1861, the US Government sent **General George Crook** to Arizona to make it safe for white settlers.



April 9, 1865—the surrender of General Lee to General Grant at Appomattox Court House, Virginia.



TUBA CITY was named for a Hopi chief from Oribi, Tuuva, who had converted to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and who allowed Latter-day Saints to later settle in the area. Today Tuba City is the largest community located on the Navajo Nation.

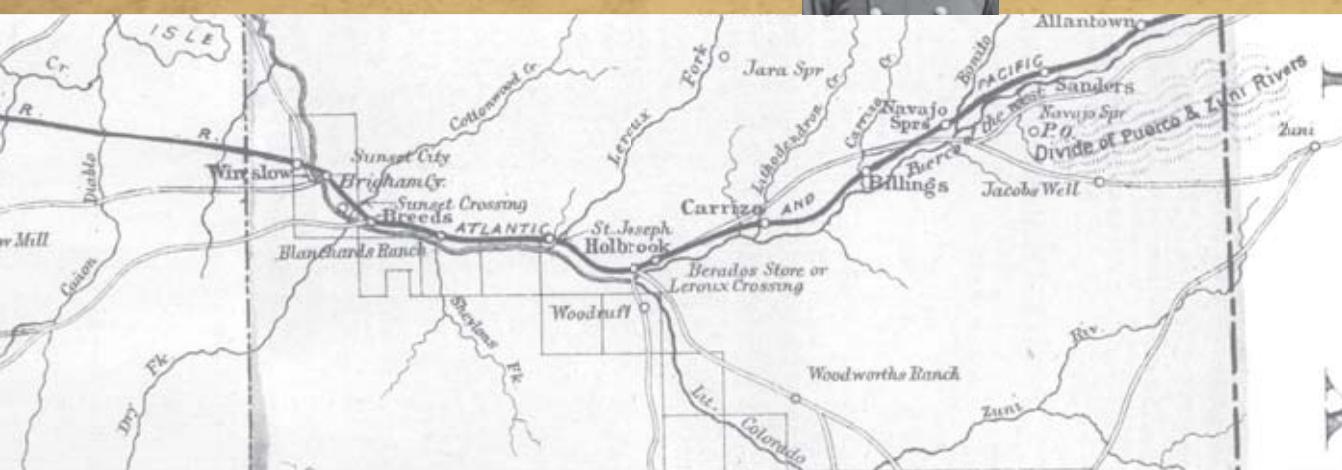
**1874
SAFFORD**

— established in Gila Valley in 1874 and 1875 by a small group of California men who had been stationed at Fort Yuma in southwestern Arizona during the Civil War. The group included Joshua Eaton Bailey, Hiram Kennedy, Daniel Hughes, H. J. Davis, and John Glasby. Named after Arizona's territorial governor, **Anson Pacey Killen Safford**



1872

DECEMBER — Brigham Young sent an exploring party led by **Lorenzo Roundy** to search for suitable town-sites along the Little Colorado River.



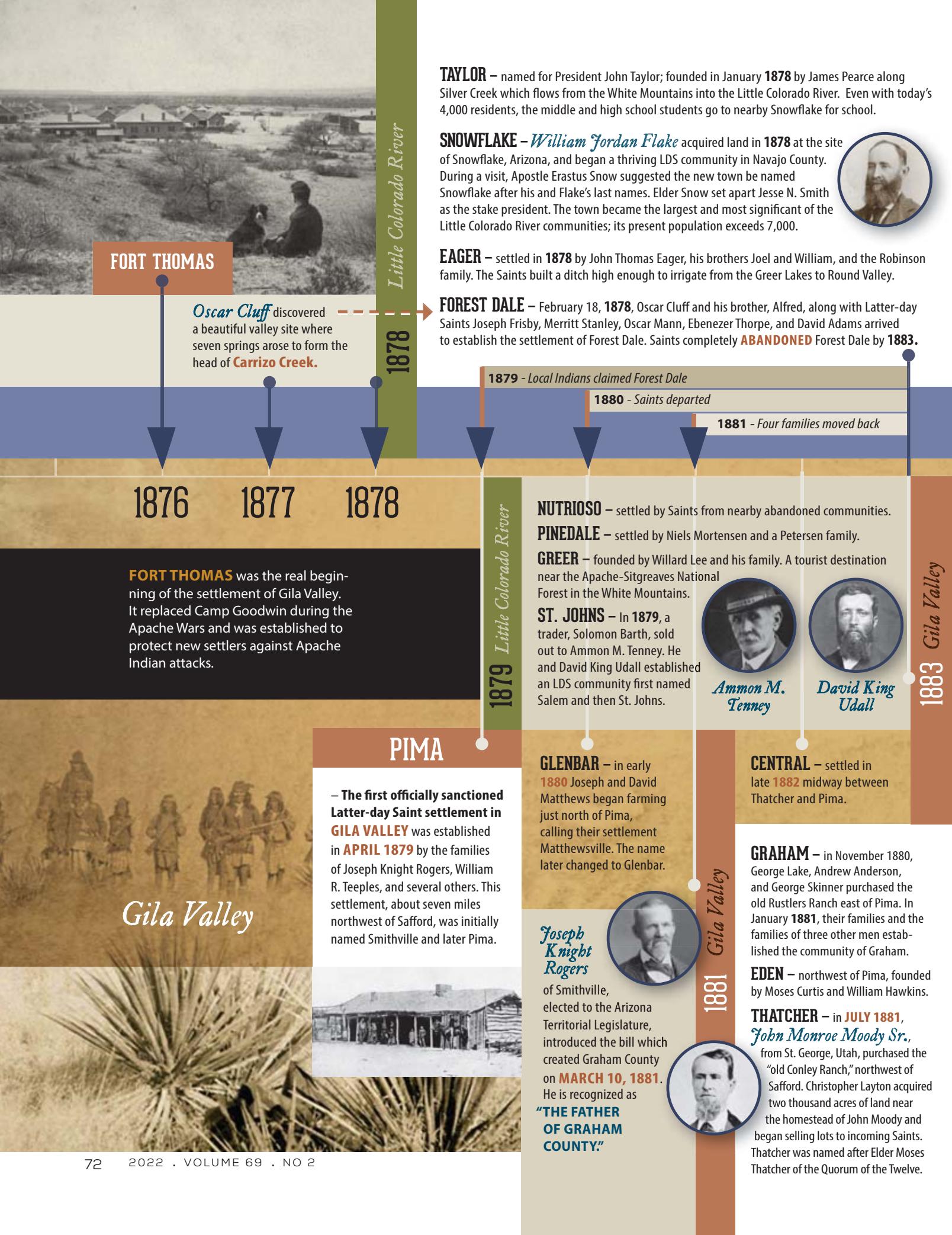


1876 Little Colorado River

1875

James S. Brown led a small party to **MOENKOP** and used it as a base to explore for settlement sites in the area.

	<p>OBED ABANDONED by 1877</p>	<p>George Lake – led members of the Church in founding Obed in Navajo County, Arizona, about three miles south of Joseph City. It became the first of the Latter-day Saint communities to be abandoned (1877). The residents suffered from chills and fever; log and brush dams washed away. There were originally 123 settlers located within the ill-chosen camp site.</p>
	<p>BRIGHAM CITY ABANDONED ghost town in 1881</p>	<p>Captain Jesse O. Ballinger – led twenty Latter-day Saint families and fifteen single men to settled the Brigham City area. They built homes surrounded by a walled fort and established a United Order. Flash flooding of the Little Colorado River washed away dams and ditches, leading to crop failures. The original townsite has been annexed by the community of Winslow.</p>
	<p>SUNSET ABANDONED by 1888</p>	<p>Lot Smith – led Latter-day Saint families to settled Sunset. Drought and flash floods washed away dams and irrigation ditches, leading to crop failures. By 1884 most residents had relocated elsewhere, and by 1888 the last settlers had left. Only the hilltop Sunset Cemetery remains as the Little Colorado River now runs through the former townsite.</p>
	<p>JOSEPH CITY first known as Allen's Camp</p>	<p>Captain William C. Allen – led 73 colonists in settling what is today Joseph City. The only town of the four original 1876 settlements still in existence, it persisted through the washout of eleven dams in its history. Faithful Saints persisted and maintained their town on the Little Colorado River, and eventually a support site at Mormon Lake sprang up with a sawmill, dairy, and tannery.</p>
	<p>SPRINGERVILLE – named after Henry Springer</p>	<p>Henry Springer – in May 1876, moved his store from Albuquerque, New Mexico, to Round Valley in Arizona to serve ranchers who had arrived about 1870. The town located near Eager, Greer, and Nutrioso grew up around Henry Springer's trading post. It is located in east-central Arizona near the New Mexico border.</p>
	<p>WOODRUFF – initially named Tenney's Settlement</p>	<p>Nathan Tenney and his son Ammon – established one of the first LDS settlements after the initial four communities of Sunset, Brigham City, Obed, and Joseph City. In 1878 Lorenzo H. Hatch became the first branch president and the town was renamed Woodruff for Wilford Woodruff. It remains a small unincorporated community in Navajo County.</p>
	<p>ALPINE – first settled as a ranch in 1876</p>	<p>Anderson Bush – established a trading post he named Fort Bush. He sold his holdings in 1879 to two Latter-day Saints, William Maxwell and Fred Hamblin. As other Saints moved to the area, they named it Alpine for its high elevation of 8,012 feet. It is one of the highest spots in the United States where farming is carried out. Its population has remained steady at about 150 residents for years.</p>

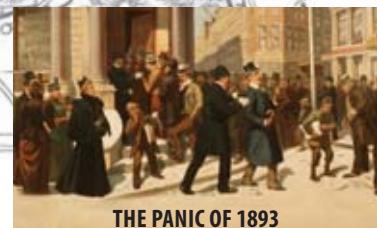


Moses and Rebecca Cluff were early settlers of Pima, Arizona. The first Cluff home is pictured below, ca. 1885.



Thatcher's first Post Office was established in **1888**. Elizabeth W. Layton (wife of Christopher Layton) was appointed the first postmaster.

Elizabeth W. Layton



THE PANIC OF 1893 was an economic depression in the US from 1893–1897.

1885

BRYCE – Ebenezer Bryce and his family left Utah in early **1883** and established Bryce, Arizona, north of Pima.



LAYTON – One of the most important LDS settlements of the early 1880s originated with **Hyrum Henry Tippets**. In **JANUARY 1883**, he purchased John Penfold's farm about a mile and a half southeast of Safford. Eventually four dozen members of the Church settled in the area and were organized as a branch named Layton in honor of the president of St. Joseph Stake, Christopher Layton. Layton was officially annexed by Safford in May 1944.



1888

St. Joseph Stake Academy was established **DECEMBER 1890**. The school opened in the Central Ward meetinghouse with seventeen students. In February 1891, it was moved to the Thatcher Ward.



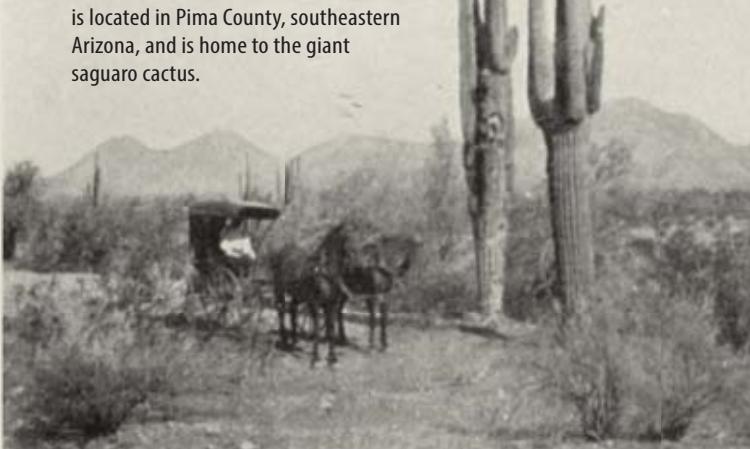
1893 1894

Gila Valley, Globe and Northern Railway – railway from Bowie, Arizona, traveling northwest to its terminus at the mining town of Globe, Arizona.



Established **MARCH 1, 1933**, **Saguaro National Park**

is located in Pima County, southeastern Arizona, and is home to the giant saguaro cactus.



Christopher Layton

was one of the most valuable contributors to the development and progress of Gila Valley



- established a stage line running from Bowie to Globe
- built an ice house to preserve dairy products in Pima
- planted fruit orchards
- opened a store
- founded a grist mill
- developed new farmland
- established the St. Joseph Stake Academy in December 1890



1914 Class Picture--- L.D.S. Academy, Thatcher, Arizona
Standing, I to R.-- Lela Lee, Stella Norton, Ralph Silby, Nora Lameroux, Wilford Hamblin, Geneva
Mattice, Jesse A. Udall, Laura Anderson.
Down, ---Ela Tyler, Urilda Moody, Lillie Roseberry, Spencer Kimball, June Matthews,
Nathaniel(Than)Curtis, Hazel Moody, Chloe Curtis.
Front, --- Leslie Clawson, Olga Chiarson, Glennie Moody, Janie Blair, Leo Mortenson
Honor; Nettie Hamblin

"When we build, let us think that we build forever, and let us think that as we lay stone on stone that a time is to come when these will be held sacred because our hands have touched them, and that men will say as they look upon the labor and wrought substance of them.

"See! This our fathers did for us."

*Eastern Arizona College memorial gate
by John Ruskin*

